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Scarecrows Take Over Exeter page 17

VALLEY VOICE

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Sources Explain Tulare Chief Breckinridge's Absence

Catherine Doe

The whereabouts of Tulare Police Chief Jerry Breckinridge have not been known to the public since May 29. Tulare City Manager Don Dorman announced on June 23 that Breckinridge had been placed on paid administrative leave. Dorman did not explain why the police chief had been put on administrative leave or how long he would be gone.

Tulare Police Chief Jerry Breckinridge

Last week two sources came forward to the *Valley Voice* to report on circumstances they had learned surrounding Breckinridge's disappearance. Each stated that Breckinridge's administrative leave is the result of an unreported drunk driving incident. The sources also filled in details which they had heard surrounding Breckinridge's arrest last year on charges of domestic abuse.

The first source referred to himself as "Pat" and is confirmed to be familiar with law enforcement in Tulare County. The second source, who identified himself as Chris, corroborated both stories and added his own details. A motivating factor behind the sources coming forward, they said, was the fact that Tulare tax payers are spending more than $10,000

BRECKINRIDGE continued on **10 »**

Site for Bajun American Properties housing complex next to fenced off remnant of Mussel Slough. Courtesy/Robin Mattos

HEAT Wins First Round Against the City of Hanford

Has 10 days to file new appeal against Bajun

Catherine Doe

Hanford Environmental Action Team (HEAT) won its case against the City of Hanford concerning the Bajun American Properties housing development. HEAT appealed the city's decision to approve the development's site plans without an Environmental Impact Review (EIR). The judge decided in a September 22 hearing that HEAT would be given 10 more days from the issuance of the court's ruling to appeal the city's decision.

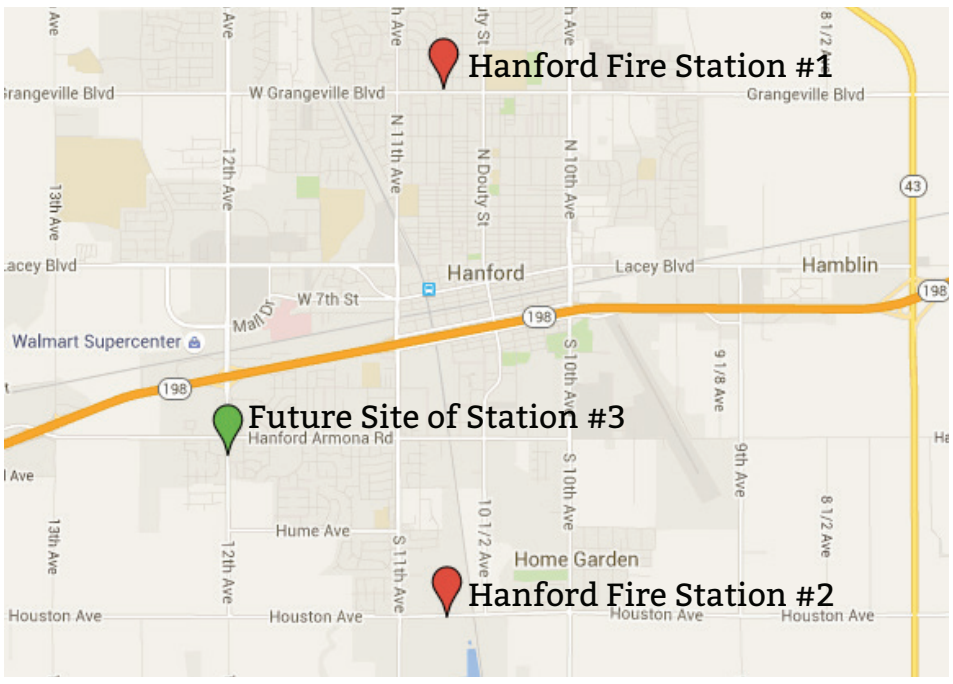
The city's administrator, Melody Haigh, signed-off on the developer's application on June 1, indicating that the city's general plan did not require an EIR on the project. Haigh then publically filed the approved site plan and notified HEAT's lawyer, Richard Harriman, on June 2. HEAT filed their appeal and paid a $1,000 fee on June 12 but Hanford City Attorney Ty Mizote, said they were a day late as the opportunity to appeal had closed on June 11.

The court agreed with HEAT that their appeal and fee should have been accepted by the City of Hanford and ordered a redo.

Bajun American Properties plans on building a two-story, 216-unit complex on the corner of Centennial Dr. and Millennium Way. The empty land is zoned as medium density residential. Back in June, city staff decided that "the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment since the project is to be located in an already urbanized area."

That is debatably true and false. The

HEAT continued on **10 »**



Map data courtesy Google.

Hanford Fire Station Plans Won't Require Sale of Park

Dave Adalian

Hanford is getting a much-needed new fire station and part of Hidden Valley Park will not have to be sold to fund it.

At a study session held September 15, Hanford City Council directed its staff to put together a construction plan for a third station the fire department needs to decrease its response times. Construction will be funded using money already on hand, and a request for bids should go out by spring of next year.

"We're probably about six months away from a 'check-ready,'" said City Manager Darrel Pyle, responding to a question about when the council will have to reach for its checkbook. The time, he said, is needed to define the scope of project, which will be designed and built by a single firm, at 12th Avenue and Woodland Drive.

But the Hanford Fire Department will still be short on space even after construction is complete, and additional manpower will be needed to full-staff all the city's stations. The final decision on the sale of the undeveloped portion of Hidden Valley Park also has yet to be made.

Three Options for Funding

Given the options of borrowing the money to construct the new station, issuing bonds at a similar interest rate or using "one-time monies" already on hand, the unanimous but reluctant consensus of council was the third option. Fire Chief Chris Ekk said the city has about $2.3 million it can put toward the project, including $617,000 in impact fees paid by developers for fire protection.

The remaining money will come from sources such as a $491,000 reimbursement from the state for services it requires cities to provide and $471,000 the city received in April of this year to settle a lawsuit against Kings County for the over collection of property tax administration fees.

The move will expend the one-time funds and deplete HFD's impact fee fund, a move the Council saw as unfortunate but necessary. Ekk, however, said funding construction this way could

HANFORD continued on **8 »**

Walk 'n Bike Plan Moving Forward in Tulare County

Nancy Vigran

More bike lanes and better walking conditions may be in the future for some areas of the county with the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) moving into the second phase of its planning project, Walk 'n Bike Tulare County.

Last June, TCAG adopted a new plan to seek transportation funding for cities and around the county. Two studies are being done – Walk n' Bike, and a long-range transit plan, said Roberto Brady, TCAG project manager.

Having collected data for the Walk 'n Bike plan on local conditions including commute information, destination locations and collision records, as well as any local planning information from cities and the county, TCAG is now moving forward into a needs assessment phase, Brady said. TCAG will now be looking for information from the community and public regarding biking and walking obstacles countywide, including specific problem locations.

WALK N BIKE continued on **11»**

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

I Thank the PAC-12 Network

The water went out in our house a couple of weeks back, and my first thought was, "Welcome to East Porterville." This was particularly galling because just the night before I could hear, through an open living room window, the reassuring susurration of the citrus irrigation. It's a sound that says, "All is well with your well." At least so far.

Alas, it was not. Unbeknownst to us, some frayed wires at the well head had finally failed, causing depressurization of the entire system. I discovered this--a la Murphy's Law--in the shower, fully lathered.

Just my luck.

I wiped the shampoo from my eyes and, clutching a towel around my midriff, staggered throughout the house in search of water. We were, literally, tapped out; there was not so much as a drop, either, from any outside hose. This was problematic--as I had layout (of this paper) in 40 minute's time--but the solution, mercifully, was obvious: the pool. After all, I had done it before, comfortably, in Cabo. In fact, had the water not so frequently failed there it might never have occurred to me to avail myself of the pool here. I changed the towel for some trunks and plunged in. The water, of course, was freezing.

It's just this sort thing--the shower having gone out when it did--that prevents me from gambling. I'm not even tempted. Gambling supposes risk and, in my case at least, there is none. I know I'll lose. It's just my luck--or lack thereof. Having said that, there was the time in Reno, in 1989, when, passing a roulette table, I was suddenly overcome by the notion of placing $100 on number 16. In a word, my wife said, "No." But she did agree to pause long enough to watch the spin. We would have won $3500.

That was the only time I've ever had the feeling that something positive would happen; usually, I'm positive something negative will.

This is why my wife says I'm the worst person to watch Bears football with. Not the Chicago Bears--the Golden Bears, as in the University of California. That's where we met. But I've been following them since 1968, and 47 years of heartbreak and futility have certainly taught me pessimism.

So I know better than to bet on the Bears--they'll lose, or else not beat the spread. I also, for similar reasons, don't bet against them. It's all I can do to watch, and sometimes I can't even manage that--as if watching itself were bad juju, and the team's fortunes would improve if I refrained.

For some time now, ridiculously, this minuet of my being a Bears fan has seemed personal and spooky.

Between 1968 and 2014, the Bears posted a record of 252-278-7. I have seen things I didn't think were possible on a football field--not good things--and I've seen them repeated. To be fair, though, I did witness The Play. But that's like saying, "We'll always have Paris."

Here's the thing: The last time the Bears were in a Rose Bowl was on January 1, 1959. That's before I was born. And the last time the Bears won a Rose Bowl was on January 1, 1938--which is before my parents were born.

Forget winning it: I'm convinced that in my lifetime--sigh--the Bears will never be Rosy again. Why? In 1968--my first year as a fan--the Bears' conference, having morphed from the PCC (Pacific Coast Conference) to the AAWU (Athletic Association of Western Universities) declared itself to be the Pac-8. We never won the Pac-8. In 1978 the two major Arizona schools were added and--Abracadabra!--we had the Pac-10. We never won the Pac-10. And in 2011 Utah and Colorado joined, engendering--you guessed it--the Pac-12. In my lifetime, then, the conference has grown by half--but our chances haven't. We weren't even competitive against seven teams.

It's like being deeply in love with a beautiful woman who can't keep herself from breaking your heart. And in this instance absence doesn't make the heart grow fonder. It just makes sense. It's the best medicine.

So far this year the Bears are 4-0, and I have only been able to watch one game, on ABC--which we won when Texas, inexplicably, missed a last-second extra point.

I am, therefore, not in the least looking askance at the creation of the Pac-12 Network or its failure to reach an agreement with DirectTV to air the Bears', or other conference games. I welcome it. In fact, I thank the Pac-12 Network.

— Joseph Oldenbourg

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Political Fix

Catherine Doe

District 1 Race Gets Crowded

When Tulare County Supervisor Allan Ishida announced that he was not running for re-election, two strong contenders, and one unknown, came forward to throw their hat in the ring for the open seat; Vincent Salinas, Ted Macaulay and newcomer, Kuyler Crocker. At first glance, it seemed the rightful heir to Tulare County Supervisor District 1 was going to be the former mayor of Exeter, Mr. Macaulay. But after a little research that doesn't seem to be the case. The "newcomer" while young, wasn't so unknown.

While I was at the Voter Registrar's office snooping through everyone's financial records, in walked Mr. Macaulay. He was mayor of Exeter for 12 years and is located in the heart of District 1. He asked the lady behind the counter if any more people had filed their paperwork to run for Tulare County Supervisor District 1. She said that no one has officially filed their paperwork because candidates can't until January 1, 2016. Candidates have been filing their financial forms, however, if they want to start fundraising.

Even though my derriere was well ensconced in front of the registrar's only computer terminal available to the public, I relinquished my seat to Mr. Macaulay to go make a phone call. He was looking into Mr. Crocker's financial statements, and after he left, I thought I would also.

I was surprised to find out that the 28-year-old from Strathmore had already raised $16,825 for his campaign. Mr. Crocker had also hired Evette Bakke, a political finance director who handles the campaign finances for everyone who is anyone running for office in Tulare County--or at least those who can afford her. It also appears that Mr. Crocker, and not Mr. Macaulay, is the appointed heir apparent to District 1. Not only is Mr. Crocker a former staffer of Congressman Devin Nunes, but, in June of this year, Supervisor Ishida donated $1,000 to Crocker's campaign. Of course Rudy Mendoza, also a staffer for Rep. Nunes, was the heir apparent in the 26th Assembly District race--and look what that got him.

Lost somewhere in the mix is former Visalia City Planner Vincent Salinas. Before realizing the heft of his two opponents, I assumed Mr. Salinas would win the supervisor's race. He has the experience, speaking skills, name recognition, and conservative chops that county voters want. Now it's looking like District 1 will be the hardest fought local race of 2016.

One last interesting tidbit: I noticed that in Mr. Crocker's fervor to serve his community he has not bothered to vote, at least not for the last five years. Maybe he can take the time to find a ballot box in 2016, if only to vote for himself.

Shupe Ahoy!

When the last issue of the *Valley Voice* hit the stands on September 17, Matt Shupe, director of communications for Assemblyman Devon Mathis, was pretty hot under the collar. Mr. Shupe called me at 12:00pm sharp to say that my article in Political Fix about Assemblyman Mathis was completely wrong. Mr. Shupe explained that Assemblyman Mathis did not submit his name, as a freshman member, to be considered as minority leader of the state assembly. He and Sean Doherty, Assemblyman Mathis' chief of staff, understand that the press has to do its job but did not appreciate my writing an unsubstantiated story.

I responded that my sources might have been incorrect and I encouraged them to write a rebuttal. In fact, I very much looked forward to reading it. The *Valley Voice* would immediately post their rebuttal on Facebook and include it in our next issue.

"Sean is writing one as we speak," Mr. Shupe said.

Making sure Mr. Shupe wasn't so upset about my article that our get together was canceled, I asked, "are we still on for our meeting next week?"

"Absolutely," said Mr. Shupe.

So I anxiously waited for Mr. Doherty's response, and I waited and I waited. I wondered why, in all my naiveté, his response was taking days to land in my inbox, when I finally realized, it wasn't coming at all. I then waited for Mr. Shupe to confirm our meeting, and waited and waited.

Not only did Mr. Shupe not show up for a "meet and greet" that he initiated with the *Valley Voice*, Mr. Doherty did not write a rebuttal to my Political Fix article. The reasons why Mr. Doherty did not set the record straight on Assemblyman Mathis concerning the minority leader position, I will leave to the discretion of our readers.

With one false step after another, I thought, is Assemblyman Mathis' rough start to his first term all in my head or is it true? Is it his staff or is it him? So I conducted a super scientifically administered survey at Visalia's Saturday Farmer's Market in the Sears parking lot. I wanted to hear outside of the spin room how well known Assemblyman Mathis is. I spoke to all age groups, ethnicities and income earners, and this is what I found.

Out of the 60 people I interviewed, 51 did not know the name of their assemblyperson. Nine knew it was Assemblyman Mathis, but that included a handful of people who said "I think his name starts with an 'M.'" To be generous I put them down in the "yes" column. Of the 51 people who didn't know who their assemblyperson was, I encouraged them to guess. Four of them said Rudy Mendoza. Many others said former Assemblywoman Connie Conway, who they loved, and I assured them they could vote for her again in 2018 state senate election.

The good news for Assemblyman Mathis is that Mr. Mendoza did not rank high in the favorable comments category during my survey, and a rematch would be extraordinarily ill-advised. It is possible that Assemblyman Mathis may not face a serious contender in 2016. The bad news is that not a lot of people know who their assemblyperson is, so he has just a little better name recognition than he did when he started his campaign in 2013.

The survey was much more revealing in the comments than the numbers. An

POLITICAL FIX continued on **4 »**

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Political Fix

Continued from p. 3

anecdotal story of Assemblyman Mathis' first year came from a person high up in the administration of the Visalia Unified School District (VUSD.) The VUSD and the Tulare Unified School District always stay in close communication with their assemblyperson. (They loved Ms. Conway.) Because of issues involving state education funds, administrators need to be in close contact with their representatives. Neither had been successful in establishing a line of communication with Assemblyman Mathis' office.

It's also interesting to note that every person I surveyed, plus a few more, who voted in the 2014 election, faithfully reads our paper. One of the shoppers at the farmers market said, "You know the *Valley Voice* is our only true source of information." Communication directors for politicians, please take note.

In the end, nine out of 60 people actually isn't that horrible in name recognition. Assemblyman Mathis is probably better known in Porterville than Rep. Kevin McCarthy, who might be the country's next Speaker of the House.

Lewis Griswold from *The Fresno Bee* just did an informal survey in front of Porterville's main post office and many had not heard of the congressman. The takeaway is that Assemblyman Mathis was well liked when he was first elected, at least by those who knew of him. He has had a rough and slow start to his first term in office, but unlike many people, he may get a second chance.

In the meantime, I have some down to earth advice for the communications director and chief of staff – take your ego out of the equation and do your job. If Assemblyman Mathis does get a second chance to right this ship and serve another term, you both may not be aboard.

Local Boy Does Even Better

For all those who have been living under a rock for the last week, Representative John Boehner of Ohio announced that he would be stepping down as Speaker of the House at the end of October. Rep. Boehner's announcement caused more of a ruckus in Washington, DC than either the Pope's or Xi Jinping's visit, causing Rep. Nunes and Rep. McCarthy to miss Tulare County's annual Lincoln dinner on September 27.

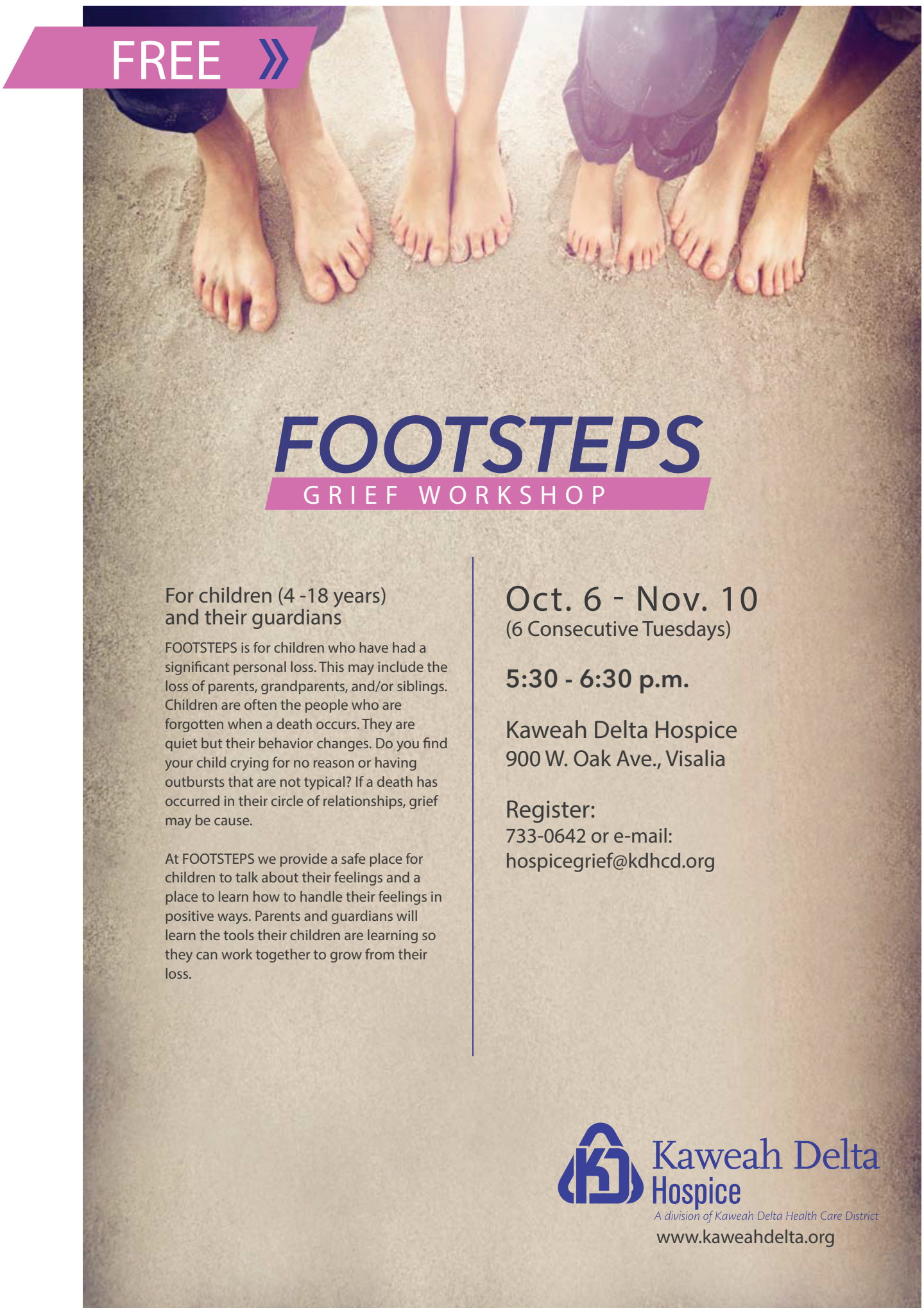
What's newsworthy for us locals, so far away from the upheaval going on in DC, is that one of our South Valley representatives, McCarthy is the number one choice to become the next Speaker of the House. Rep. McCarthy announced his candidacy for the position of House Speaker on Monday. No date has been set for the election, but the nominee must be approved by a majority of the 435-member House. The House is comprised of 247 Republicans to 188 Democrats, so the next Speaker will definitely be Republican.

If elected, Rep. McCarthy will be the only Central Valley representative to ever be third in line to the presidency. Just last year, he was also the only Central Valley representative to ever be elected as Majority Leader of the House of Representatives. Congressman McCarthy represents District 23, which covers most of Kern County and the eastern areas of Tulare County including Lindcove, Lemon Cove, Three Rivers, Springville, Strathmore and Porterville. The only other representative from California to be Speaker of the House was Rep. Nancy Pelosi from 2007 to 2011.

Rep. McCarthy's rise in power has been as shocking as it has been fast. After winning his first election to Congress in 2007 it only took him four years to attain the position of House Whip, the third most powerful position in Congress. It didn't seem likely that Rep. McCarthy would rise in the ranks anytime soon--until an unlikely series of events occurred. Rep. Eric Cantor, the second in command in the majority leader position, lost his seat in a shocker of an election in the 2014 Virginia primary. Then Rep. Boehner shocked everyone by announcing he was stepping down as Speaker of the House on October 30. Enter stage right Congressman Kevin McCarthy.

The Tea Party wing of Congress is cheering Rep. Boehner's departure, but they shouldn't expect anything different from Rep. McCarthy. He is a bridge-builder and great fundraiser for all fellow Republicans no matter how conservative, but he is not one of them. The group of 30 that calls itself the House Freedom Caucus will undoubtedly like Rep. McCarthy as a person, but they are not going to like the way he votes. Rep. McCarthy is firmly ensconced in the "establishment" wing of the Republican Congress, which the House Freedom Caucus hates more than Democrats.

Rep. Nunes, who never fails to add colorful commentary when it comes to the Tea Party, said, "They just come out here to you guys and complain and they blog and they Facebook, but when it's time to actually raise money and go recruit candidates and win elections so that you can stop Obama, which is what they say they want to do, they don't have the capability of doing it."



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West Hills College Names New Lemoore Campus President

Staff Reports

Kristin L. Clark, Ed. D., former vice president of Student Services at Orange Coast College in Costa has been named new president for West Hills College Lemoore.

The choice of Clark came on the heels of a national search which yielded 43 candidates. Nine were interviewed for the position.

Kristin L. Clark, Ed. D

Three finalists came back for two days of presentations to faculty, staff and the public, followed by individual interviews with Chancellor Frank Gornick, recommended her to the Board of Trustees.

Gornick said Clark "comes to us from Orange Coast College – one of the larger multi-college districts in the state.

She brings with her a wide variety of experiences and practices that served her well in understanding the mission of the community college, which also made her very compatible with our vision, 'The relentless pursuit of student success.' Her colleagues described her as the 'go to person' at the college when issues needed to be resolved in a collegial manner or when new initiatives needed a champion.

"Her understanding of the multi-college district and the challenges facing California community colleges makes her the ideal candidate to be the next President of West Hills College Lemoore."

Clark has worked at OCC since 1999 when she was hired as director of admissions, records and enrollment technology. Prior to that, she had been the registrar for California National University in North Hills for five years. In 2007, she became OCC's dean of enrollment services and was promoted to her VP position in 2010. She has taught at Pepperdine, Golden West College and most recently at OCC and CSU Fullerton.

At a public forum in Lemoore recently, the educator talked about her life as a California native growing up in a rural community, being a member of the 4H Club, riding horses and her love of small town living. She is a first generation college student.

"I believe in what community colleges can do for people," she said.

Answering questions from those attending the forum, she said, "What gets me through difficult days is honesty and building relationships, and being part of something bigger,"

She relates to older students.

"I went back to college at 32. I realized if I wanted to do something that made a difference, I knew I had to get my education," she said.

Clark told the students and others in the audience that her background was ideal for the Lemoore presidency.

"I love small towns and I know the uniqueness of the California community college system. West Hills College Lemoore is a great college," she said.

She holds a BS in Business & Management from University of Phoenix, a Master's in Educational Technology from Pepperdine, and a Doctorate in Higher Education Management from the University of Pennsylvania.

Smith's Case With the Tulare Police Department Still Unresolved

Catherine Doe

A hearing was held on September 24 for Jonathan Smith who was facing possible charges of resisting arrest. This, one month following Smith's altercation with members of the Tulare Police Department, where, he has said, he was severely beaten, and arrested resisting arrest.

The hearing lasted only a few minutes. The lawyer representing the District Attorney's office told the judge that they were not yet pressing charges.

According to Assistant District Attorney Anthony Fultz, the DA's office has a year to press charges for misdemeanors but normally likes to get cases wrapped up in a timely manner.

He said that Smith's case presents some unique issues and the department wants to ensure they make the correct decision. Because the DA's office is taking its time to review all of the facts, they have not yet decided whether to press charges. Fultz could not comment on the facts of the case until the DA's office review was completed. Charges will be pressed if the DA believes that Smith did engage in illegal activity.

Smith and his attorneys, Maggie Melo and John Sarsfield, are considering filing a civil suit for the injuries he sustained during the arrest.

According to a September 15 letter Melo and Sarsfield sent to Tulare's City Manager, "he (Smith) was assaulted, without legal cause or excuse, by officers of the City of Tulare police department. He sustained significant, serious physical injuries, including but not limited to damage to his eye, concussion, bruising, and pain and suffering. He was wrongfully arrested and booked in the County Jail. He was denied proper medical care by your officers. Additionally, his pet golden retriever was mistreated by the officers who tazered and pepper-sprayed the dog."

"Your officers violated a variety of civil rights laws in assaulting and arresting Mr. Smith. They have seized and wrongfully withhold his personal property (a cell phone) without either a court order or other legal authority. They searched the phone and its contents without a warrant. Since receiving the beating at the hands of your officers, Mr. Smith and his friends or family have been continued to be harassed by your employees, most recently this past weekend."

Smith's lawyers cannot obtain a copy of the police report until and if the DA presses charges, and do not even know if one was completed.

At this time, no one outside of the TPD knows the police department's side of the story or even which Tulare Police officers were involved. Melo and Sarsfield said they have been trying to work amicably with the TPD and have asked for the identities of the police officers. They have also asked for the return of Smith's cell phones. The lawyers anticipate that it will take a few weeks to get the cell phones back.

Agriculture

Sales from U.S. Organic Farms Up 72 Percent, USDA Reports

USDA NASS

Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released the results of the 2014 Organic Survey, which show that 14,093 certified and exempt organic farms in the United States sold a total of $5.5 billion in organic products in 2014, up 72 percent since 2008.

The top 10 states in sales accounted for 78 percent of U.S. organic sales in 2014, with California leading the nation with $2.2 billion. Additionally, the industry shows potential for growth in production as approximately 5,300 organic producers (39 percent) report that they intend to increase organic production in the United States over the next five years. Another 688 farms with no current organic production are in the process of transitioning into organic agriculture production.

"Producers reported in the 2014 Organic Survey that they expect to expand U.S. organic production in the coming years, making the data even more important for policy and programs. These results will assist with the development of appropriate risk management programs designed to help organic producers," said NASS Administrator Joseph T. Reilly. "The report also shows that organic producers are providing a wide variety of products to customers and are getting those items from farm to table more efficiently."

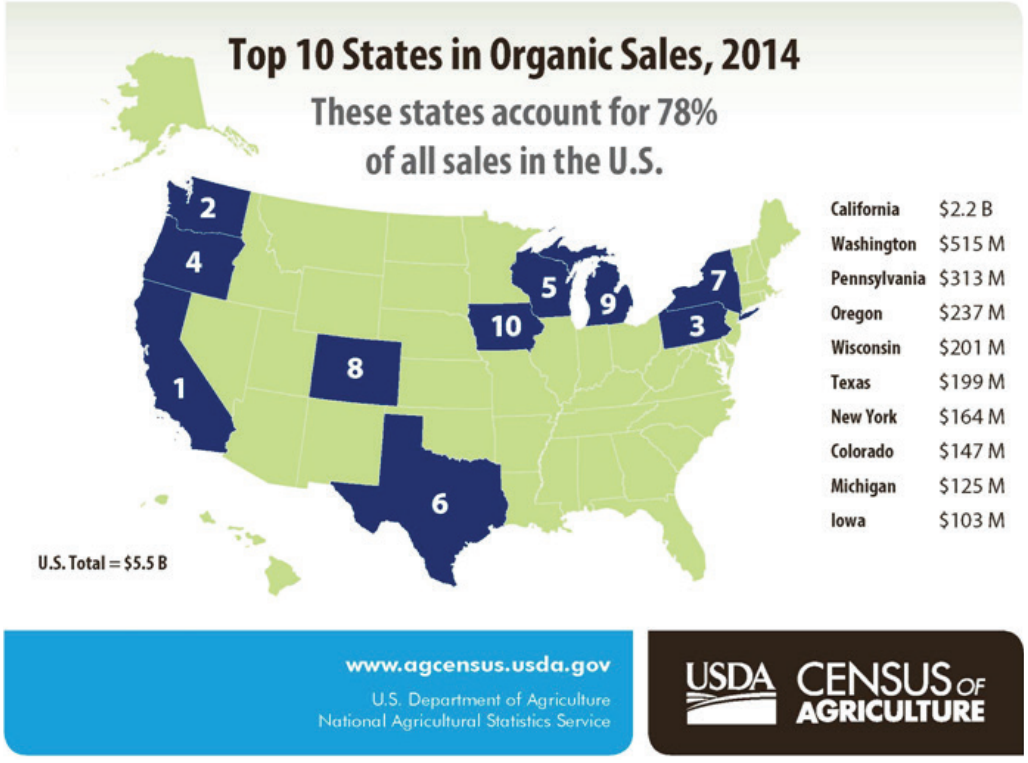
The selection of organic products sold by U.S. farms in 2014 was diverse, from dairy and proteins, to fruits, vegetables and grains. The top five commodities in organic sales were:

- Milk, $1.08 billion
- Eggs, $420 million
- Broiler chickens, $372 million
- Lettuce, $264 million
- Apples, $250 million

The vast majority of organic agricultural products sold in 2014 were sold close to the farm. According to the report, the first point of sale for 80 percent of all U.S. organic products was less than 500 miles from the farm, compared to 74 percent in 2008. Of the sales of organic products in 2014:

- 46 percent were sold within 100 miles
- 34 percent were sold 101-499 miles
- 18 percent were sold 500 or more miles
- 2 percent were sold internationally

Additionally, 63 percent of U.S. organic farms reported selling products to wholesale markets. These sales accounted for 78 percent of U.S. organic farm sales. Wholesale markets, such as buyers for supermarkets, processors, distributors, packers and cooperatives, were serving as the marketing channel of choice for U.S. organic farmers to get organic agriculture products to customers.



"This report helps show a more complete picture of the U.S. organic industry at the national and state levels," added Reilly. "The 2014 Organic Survey data will serve as a valuable resource as the agriculture industry continues to look for ways to meet agricultural challenges and consumer needs in the 21st century."

The survey is part of the Census of Agriculture program and was conducted by NASS in conjunction with USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) to provide objective information to serve the organic industry. Survey results are available at www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/Organic_Survey/ or the Quick Stats database at http://quickstats.nass.usda.gov. In addition, join NASS for a webinar about the 2014 Organic Survey, hosted by the USDA Organic Working Group, on September 29, from 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET. To join the webinar, visit www.readytalk.com, dial 1-866-740-1260, and use passcode 720 6000.

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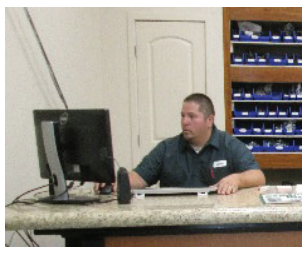

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Agriculture

Aspire to Inspire: Become a Certified Master Gardener

Priscilla Girard

When I first moved to Porterville 30-something years ago, I remember driving around looking at different neighborhoods for a home. I was so impressed with one home's landscaping and appeal that I kept going back to that area hoping to find a house.

What made it look so welcoming were the colorful blossoms spilling out of the window boxes, the perfectly trimmed low hedges with skirts of bright flowers lining the curved walkway, and beautiful shade trees on the corner lot sheltering lush ferns, impatiens, and coleus.

I became acquainted with the wonderful woman who created this inspiring landscape and she became my go-to source for all my fledgling gardening questions.

Her cheerful and gracious generosity in sharing her wealth of information made me long to be just like her. I discovered she was a Master Gardener and pledged to follow in her footsteps someday, which I did in 2010.

Master Gardeners are volunteers who share a common goal of educating the public in research-based home gardening practices, integrated pest management, and sustainable landscape practices in our community.

They are trained by and under the supervision of the University of California Cooperative Extension.

To accomplish these lofty goals, Master Gardeners are available to answer questions from the public in Tulare and Kings counties by conducting office hours at the UC Cooperative Extension, booths at several local Farmers' Markets and at special events at local nurseries several times a year.

In addition, Master Gardeners offer workshops and demonstrations to the public on rose pruning, fruit tree pruning, composting, and other garden topics. They serve the community by maintaining the roses at the Tulare County Courthouse and the Ralph Moore Rose Garden, as well as cultivating a new demonstration garden at Hurley Elementary School.

Master Gardeners mentor teachers and other adults who interact with youth in establishing school and community gardens.

Each Master Gardener gives a minimum of 25 hours of volunteer time each year and acquires a minimum of 12 hours of continuing education hours annually to remain in the program.

The rewards of serving as a Master Gardener volunteer are numerous and varied. From the new-found friendships outside of their local community to the fulfillment in sharing knowledge and gardening experiences with others, or to improving one's own personal gardening repertoire, being a Master Gardener creates a sense of purpose in giving back to the community.

Even though she always loved to garden, Nancy Hawkins, current Master Gardener President, joyfully admits, "As a Master Gardener, I now have the knowledge and support to garden properly. I know which plants to use in our area, how to irrigate efficiently, and how to use and dispose of pesticides and fertilizers correctly. But, best of all, I have met a group of people who share my passion and enthusiasm."

If you are interested in expanding your gardening knowledge and sharing your horticultural passion with others, the Master Gardener program may be perfect for you.

A new training class will be offered in January of 2016. The weekly classes will be held Wednesday mornings from January through May. If you are interested, contact Susan Long, Master Gardener Program Coordinator, at 684-3343 or solong@ucanr.edu.

To be considered, you must fill out an on-line application at http://cetulare.ucanr.edu and attend an orientation on October 14, 2015 from 3-4:30 located at the Master Gardener Office, 4437 B South Laspina Street, Tulare.

More detailed information can be found on the Tulare-Kings County Master Gardener website, at http://cetulare.ucanr.edu.

Priscilla Girard has been a Master Gardener since 2010 and lives and gardens in Springville.

USDA NASS Begins Gathering Fruit, Vegetable Operation Food Safety Data

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is now surveying produce packers and other post-harvest businesses to help fruit and vegetables operations as they prepare to implement new federal food safety requirements.

The 2015 Produce Post-Harvest Microbial Food Safety Practices Survey marks the first time since 1998 that such a survey has been conducted. NASS Administrator Joseph T. Reilly encouraged operators to participate in the survey, noting that implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act might affect post-harvest businesses.

FSMA was signed into law in 2011. It aims to ensure the US food supply is safe by shifting the focus from responding to contamination to preventing it, according to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Under FSMA, the FDA may issue rules for produce safety.

"Better data lead to better decisions," Reilly said. "This survey will provide a wealth of new information with respect to where the industry is on the eve of FSMA implementation."

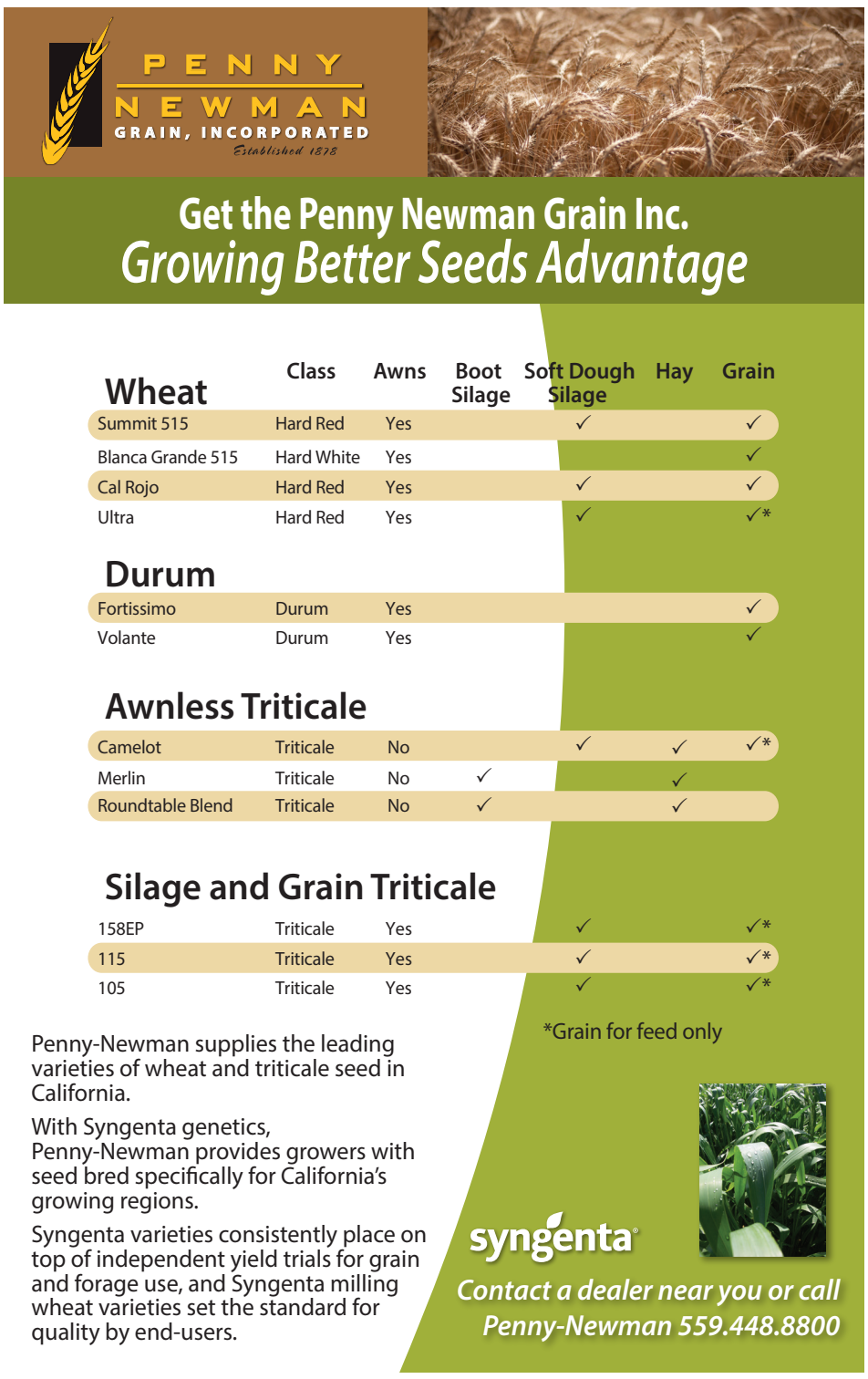
The survey looks at food safety practices, some costs, information about the sizes and types of operations, and any food safety requirements for produce coming into the post-harvest operation. NASS will contact approximately 2,200 post-harvest businesses across the US.

Businesses may respond online at www.agcounts.usda.gov through January, 2016. Although USDA recommends responding online as the most convenient method, businesses also have the option to respond by mail.

Data obtained from the survey will be used by USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS), the sponsoring agency for the project, for analysis and publication. ERS will use the data to:

- Document changes in food safety practices since 1998
- Provide a benchmark of practices prior to implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)
- Examine expected costs of compliance
- Estimate the impact of FSMA on the produce industry
- Identify the most crucial areas for future research and training efforts
- Ensure that policymakers, produce associations and produce businesses have up-to-date information to make informed decisions that could impact the produce industry

There will be two other related surveys that focus on produce growers. Both the 2015 Fruit Chemical Use and 2016 Vegetable Chemical Use Surveys will also contain sections on microbial food safety and these will be sent to 10,900 growers in total.



U.S. Census Bureau Releases Key Stats Honoring Hispanic Heritage Month

In September 1968, Congress authorized President Lyndon B. Johnson to proclaim National Hispanic Heritage Week, observed during the week that included Sept. 15 and Sept. 16. Congress expanded the observance in 1989 to a monthlong celebration (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15) of the culture and traditions of those who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

Sept. 15 is the starting point for the celebration because it is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16 and Sept. 18, respectively.

Following are some key statistics compiled by the U.S. Census Bureau in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month.

55 million: The Hispanic population of the United States as of July 1, 2014, making people of Hispanic origin the nation's largest ethnic or racial minority. Hispanics constituted 17% of the nation's total population.

119 million: The projected Hispanic population of the United States in 2060. According to this projection, the Hispanic population will constitute 28.6% of the nation's population by that date.

55%: The percentage of all the Hispanic population that lived in California, Florida and Texas as of July 1, 2014.

38.4 million: The number of U.S. residents 5 and older who spoke Spanish at home in 2013. This is a 120 percent increase since 1990 when it was 17.3 million. Those who hablan español en casa constituted 13.0 percent of U.S. residents 5 and older. More than half (58 percent) of these Spanish speakers spoke English "very well."

Visalia Fire Department Promotes 2015 Fire Prevention Week

October 4th though the 10th is National Fire Prevention Week throughout the United States. National Fire Prevention Week began in response to the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which claimed 300 lives and destroyed more than 17,400 structures.

During Fire Prevention Week, all fire agencies throughout the nation continue to make public education and fire safety awareness a priority in order to reduce the risk of fire and the negative effect it has on our society. This year's theme is: "HEAR THE BEEP WHERE YOU SLEEP: EVERY BEDROOM NEEDS A WORKING SMOKE ALARM"

Three out of every five U.S. home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. "Smoke alarms can make the difference between life and death in a fire by alerting people in time to escape safely

During this year's National Fire Prevention Week, the Visalia Fire Department will provide presentation to all elementary schools within the Visalia City limits.

On Saturday, October 10th, the Visalia Fire Department will be hosting an Open House event to conclude National Fire Prevention Week. The Open House will be held from 10:00 am to 1:00pm at Fire Station 55, 6921 W Ferguson Ave. The Open House is a free event that will allow citizens the opportunity to tour the fire station, interact with the on duty fire personnel and watch rescue demonstrations. In addition, there will be members of other City of Visalia Departments and community partners to answer questions about related services.

Please contact Fire Marshal, Kurtis Brown with any questions at 559-713-4261 or 559-713-4266

Hanford

Continued from p. 1

actually speed up construction of a fourth station in the future.

"Using these one-time monies will set us up to build the next firehouse, and then we can explore a different funding option for that," he said. "It'll set us up for ... five or six years down the road when the Costco's sales-tax revenue is coming in."

Building Quickly and Cheaply

Had the city decided to borrow the $1.5 million represented by the one-time monies, it would have saddled itself with seven to 10 years of monthly payments of up to $19,644 a month. Issuing bonds would have presented a similar repayment schedule and interest burden.

By spending money the city already has, the Council hopes to get the project moving quickly with a minimum financial impact for city residents.

"It doesn't cost taxpayers money," Mayor Russ Curry said. "It doesn't cost us any interest rate of 2% or 3% on $2 million, (which) is a lot of money. We have the money. We can build it now."

Design and Construction

Council was also presented with a trio of choices for managing construction, eventually opting to hire a single firm to design and build the project. This approach has the advantage of putting the architects, engineers and contractors on the job at the start of the project.

"Everybody's in it from the beginning," Ekk said.

However, the "design-build" method means little deviation can occur once plans are drawn and construction begun. Pyle said design-build has the advantage of allowing the city to set a firm limit on spending.

"How much fire station can we build without knowing what our final budget is?" he asked to emphasize the point.

Fire Stations No. 1 and No. 2 were constructed using a design-bid-build process, in which the architectural and construction firms are hired separately. That approach, Pyle said, can lead to cost overruns or scuttle the project entirely.

"We carry the risk that what the architect drew is more expensive than our budget when those bids come back to us," he said. "As an example, we are sitting on a set of construction drawings that were put together for Fire Station No. 3 and Fire Station No. 4. They were beautiful drawings by a very qualified architectural firm. They just drew very expensive buildings for us to build, and they've been sitting on the shelf ever since."

When the city considered building the smaller of those designs in 2009, the cost was pegged at $3.6 million, a sum it could not afford then or now.

The current proposal does not include funding for "soft costs," such as radios, IT and furnishing the new station.

Other Problems to Solve

Even with a third fire station in the works, the Hanford Fire Department is not expanding.

"Relocating Station 2 to the new fire station is merely an exercise in ability to increase our response time and serve our citizens better than where we at now," said Councilman Gary Pannett. "Just so citizens are aware, we're not adding additional staffing with this. We're not purchasing additional equipment. We're just kind of relocating."

Ekk said the department is running out of room at Station 1, and some equipment is being stored outside at Station 2. The new station will not include additional storage. The department is also in need of more administrative space, he said.

"Our prevention staff is already sharing offices," said Ekk. "We're running out of room."

Additionally, Ekk says new firefighters are needed to fully staff three stations in the future.

"We're not that far from fully staffing three stations," he said. "It'll be tight with three to four (additional personnel). Six would give us a good cushion to staff three stations."

Hidden Valley Fate Undecided

Even though the direction taken by the council means the city will not have to sell the undeveloped portion of Hidden Valley Park to fund the new station, if the city will sell it is still not known. The planned sale has so far met with wide resistance from the public, as well as from the city's Parks and Recreation Commission and the Planning Commission.

In August, the Planning Commission declined to reaffirm its earlier finding from 2013 that the 18.1 undeveloped acres at the park could be considered surplus, and thus available for the city to sell at the city council's direction. That decision, however, may have been reached because the reports the commission received on the amount of land for recreational use in the city were inaccurate.

"During the meeting, the planning commission went over the numbers that were included in their staff report. Also, someone presented them with some alternative numbers," said Community Development Director Darlene Mata. "It did get a bit confusing for them (the planning commissioners)."

Since the August meeting, Mata and her staff have been "refining" their acreage count. Currently, the city's general plan calls for a ratio of two acres of parkland for every 1,000 citizens. The count Mata presented the planning commissioners at their August meeting was 126 acres, a number since revised upward to 153.79 acres, giving a ratio of 2.76 acres per 1,000 residents.

PC Decision Delayed

At the direction of the city council, Mata was to present her refined numbers to the planning commission and again request they uphold the earlier finding that would allow the sale of the Hidden Valley property.

The item was included on the commission's agenda for its meeting on September 8, however, the issue was not discussed because it "was not fully and properly placed on the agenda," said Hanford Planning Commission Chairman Steve Froberg. Froberg said the Hidden Valley decision would be taken up again by the commission at its September 22 meeting. That meeting was subsequently canceled due to a lack of other items to be considered and the absence of a commissioner.

The commission will meet again on October 13. An agenda for that meeting was not posted by press time.

Mighty Sequoias Build Student Success, Confidence

Dave Adalian

By an interesting quirk of fate, two statistics regarding Tulare County are nearly identical: About 20% of the county's land is taken up by national parks, and almost 20% of the students fail to graduate high school.

While these statistics seemingly have little to do with each other, at least one local educator thinks there is a connection. At the aptly-named Sequoia High School, Principal Adolfo Reyes says a new program that puts his students to work as volunteers in Sequoia National Park (SNP) is changing their attitudes toward school and their future.

"If you get a student out of here, it has a healing quality," said Reyes. "There's no better therapist than our national parks."

Students from Sequoia High, Visalia's alternative education school, prepare Sequoia seedlings for transplant during a field trip to Sequoia National Park. A partnership between the school and the National Park Service is helping engage students' interest in education and improve their self-confidence. Courtesy photo

'A Forgotten Place'

Sequoia High is Visalia's alternative education school, where students with chronic discipline problems are sent when they've run out of other options. Reyes, who took over at the school four years ago, says his campus has a reputation that perhaps is undeserved.

"People just saw it as a continuation school for bad kids no one wanted," he said. "Kind of a forgotten place."

What Reyes saw were teenagers who had no interest in education and were overlooking their own potential. While searching for a way to engage his students, he realized there was another element being ignored in Tulare County.

"A lot of time (in our schools), we focus on the ag," he said. "No one focuses on the park."

Reyes decided to see if park officials would be interested in a partnership. In the 125 years the SNP has been in operation, nothing like it had ever been attempted. The staff were eager at the chance, and a pilot program was put together.

The Visalia Unified School District recognizes Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and DOI/VISTA Sarah Deleon for developing the first model career pathway in the community and parks' 125-year history. (From left, VUSD Board President Juan Guerrero, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks Superintendent Woody Smeck, NPS Sequoia-South District Ranger Denise Robertson, Deleon, NPS Education Coordinator Kelly Evans, NPS Volunteer Coordinator Tim Barrett, VUSD Superintendent Craig Wheaton, Sequoia High School Principal Adolfo Reyes, and a Sequoia High School Pathway student.) Courtesy/US Dept. of Interior

Dirty Hands

In August of 2013, the first group of 18 students from SHS traveled to the park for a clean-up day. For many it was the first time they had seen the forests for which Tulare County is so famous. For others it was the first time they had been off the Valley floor. Seeing unspoiled nature, discovering careers they had never known of, meeting employees from out of state and visitors from around the globe, and doing meaningful work "empowered" his students, Reyes said.

"When they're up there, they're getting their hands dirty, handling animals," he said. "It's gotten them to focus on school."

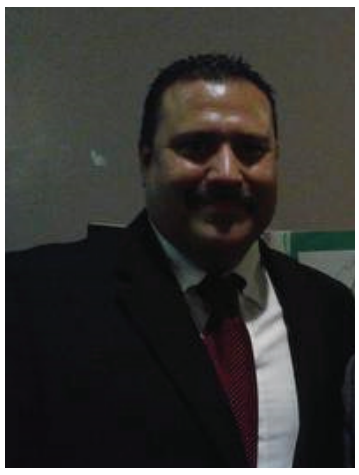
Being in the park also helps the students talk about their problems in and out of class, and to see themselves in a different light, Reyes said. This, he believes, is key to helping them find a path to a more rewarding life.

"Many times when we're up there, they open up," said Reyes. The outcome of that initial trip was everything staff at the park and school had hoped for. "All of the kids in that group graduated on time or ahead of time," Reyes said. "They're really able to turn those kids around."

From Seed to Sequoia

Like a Giant Sequoia tree sprouting from its tiny seed, the program is growing exponentially. Enthusiasm generated by the students who participated in that initial foray created a buzz on campus, and the program was expanded to include all of SHS's students. So far, more than 400 students have taken part, getting instruction first-hand from park experts and helping complete park projects. At the school, science classes are now using a curriculum based on forestry and resource conservation that was developed with the help of the National Park Service.

"We started working collaboratively with the teachers and spent a full year planning. The last two years have been different versions of the pilot program," said Kelly Evans, education programs training specialist NPS, who seems to have a genuine enthusiasm, too. "We're definitely continuing the partnership into the future. We hope to be able to offer the programs to other schools. They're (SHS) sort of the guinea pig."



Adolfo Reyes

Trail to a Career Pathway

Field trips, led by park employees, are arranged to put what students are learning at SHS into practice in the wild. The students don't just get to perform applied science, they meet the scientists and rangers at work, and learn about the educational paths that led them to their jobs.

"The students will do different types of volunteer projects depending on what they're working on at the time," Evans said. With a new partner, Reedley College, SHS students can now earn dual credit for their efforts, priming them to attend college once they graduate. "They'd be in Sequoia High and start taking classes with dual credit. They get credit through Sequoia and Reedley College. That's another big piece of the program. Career-wise, that could really set kids on the path."

So far, three students from SHS have enrolled in the forestry and natural resources program at Reedley, and SHS is planning to form its first Future Farmers of America program, one that will focus mainly on forest management.

Whether the students move on to college or not, the program is still a boon for her students, said Andi Perez, an Earth sciences and forestry teacher at SHS.

"It builds confidence," she said. "When they do service projects, they feel good about themselves. It's a big self-confidence booster."

College Bound

Jacob Martinez, 17, a senior at SHS, took part in a recent weeks-long trails maintenance project funded by a $25,000 grant the school received from the Active Trails Project. Students helped make backcountry trails more accessible, worked on reclamation projects, went on bear patrols and acted as roving helpers, answering questions from park visitors.

"The two weeks up there, every day was a new memory," Martinez said. "If I had my volunteer shirt on, people would come up to me and ask where's this or that."

Martinez, the son of a single mother with two other children, said the problems that led to him being at SHS had mainly to do with attendance, but he also said a lack of direction left him feeling as if school might not be worth the effort.

"I wasn't sure what I wanted to do," he said. "I've always dreamt of going to the mountains. I'd never really been in the alpine. I actually got offered a job up there from one of the trail crew supervisors. I wasn't old enough."

But he'll be back. Martinez discovered work in forestry could lead to long stretches of research performed alone in the deep wilds of the park, and it's something he's keen to do.

"I definitely want to go to college," he said. "I want to do something in forestry. I love science. Six months in the wild? There couldn't be nothing better than that."

A Sequoia High School student lets AmeriCorps DOI/VISTA Sarah Deleon hold a California Newt found during a water-quality monitoring project at Sequoia National Park. Courtesy/US Dept. of Interior

HEAT

Continued from p. 1

apartment complex is within a half mile of Lowe's and is zoned as residential. But it is also surrounded by vacant land and sits on the banks of Mussel Slough. The proposed future housing complex will sit where a section of Mussel Slough was unlawfully filled-in by Paynter Realty and Investments in 2007.

Paynter Realty and Investments was in the process of developing the Lowe's shopping complex when they filled-in the slough remnant. Late in 2007, HEAT sued the City of Hanford and Mizote for filling-in the slough and won their case. The developer had to pay the environmental group's lawyer fees and had to mitigate for the environmental damage caused. The city had to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with HEAT outlining conditions aimed at preventing this from ever happening again.

It is HEAT's position that an EIR must be done before building is to start on the Bajun American Properties housing complex. This could be even more urgent in light of the fact that more and more of Mussell Slough is illegally being filled-in. A letter from Harriman was sent to remind Darlene Mata, Hanford community development director, that not completing a focused EIR is in violation of the MOU signed between the city and HEAT in 2007. The MOU stated that not only should HEAT have been notified that a site review plan application had been submitted, which they were not, but that any development inside the litigated area must go through the EIR process.

It is HEAT's opinion that approving an apartment complex that sits on the banks of a natural waterway surrounded by agriculture land on three sides without an EIR defies common sense.

Sometime between March and May of this year, despite all efforts to prevent it from happening, the second section of the slough remnant was filled-in by an unknown group. The only evidence left behind was a backhoe and a missing slough. The filled-in slough remnant sits directly west of the proposed housing complex.

Breckinridge

Continued from p. 1

a month for their police chief to be on leave.

"The citizens of Tulare have a right to know where he is," said Pat.

On Memorial Day weekend of this year, Pat said, a Tulare Police Department officer was returning to the station in his cruiser after participating in a DUI checkpoint. On his way to the station he saw a Prius swerving on the road in front of him. Before he could turn on his lights to pull the suspected drunk driver over, the driver pulled his car to the side of the road, got out of the car, and said something to the effect of, "I'm drunk, take me home."

The officer, who had not yet finished his probationary period with the department, recognized the man as Breckinridge, Pat said. Not feeling comfortable arresting the police chief for drunk driving, the officer called for backup. Three more Tulare Police department officers showed up and it was decided, after a phone conversation with the city manager, to take Breckinridge home, Pat said.

Early the next morning, Dorman went to Breckinridge's home and strongly suggested that he take time off of work and enter a rehabilitation program, Pat said. Breckinridge has continued to receive his monthly salary since. Tulare Police Captain Wes Hensley has temporarily taken Breckinridge's position as chief of police. Because Breckinridge has not been seen, both sources speculated that he is still in rehab.

Breckinridge's alleged drunk driving incident in May came just over a year after his arrest on domestic abuse charges in March, 2014. Both sources suspect that alcohol may have played a role in that incident also, prompting Dorman to suggest Breckinridge get help.

According to Pat, on the evening of March 15, 2014, Breckenridge's girlfriend caught him viewing internet pornography. An argument ensued and a physical altercation followed. The girlfriend went home after the physical altercation and called a friend to commiserate, revealing the fact that she had been physically assaulted by her boyfriend.

The victim's friend happened to be a CHP officer, who, as such, is a California Mandated Reporter. Mandated Reporters must report child or domestic abuse cases when they become aware of them. The CHP officer called her superior to report the domestic abuse incident. Her superior called the Tulare County Sheriff's Department due to the conflict the Tulare police would have investigating their own chief, Pat said.

Pat heard from sources close to the Tulare County Sheriff's department that Lieutenant Robert Moore and Captain Scott Logue were sent to Breckinridge's girlfriend's home. While at the girlfriend's home the lieutenant and captain called Tulare County Sheriff Mike Boudreaux for advice on how to proceed with the domestic abuse case. Pat said that Boudreaux directed them to not contact the detective on call that night who specializes in domestic violence, but to use a newly hired detective who specialized in violent crimes, such as murder and kidnappings.

According to Pat, after receiving instructions from Sheriff Boudreaux, the lieutenant and captain contacted the violent crimes detective and requested that he meet them at Breckinridge's home. Though it was the detective's duty to collect evidence, take pictures, secure a search warrant to investigate the crime scene and obtain statements from each party, it is unclear if any of that took place. Pat stated that the detective's report contained none of this information.

Chris, who is also familiar with Tulare County law enforcement, said there were two other serious breaches of protocol that night. According to Penal Codes 243 and 273.5, during cases of domestic abuse, all firearms are to be taken from the accused's home. Also, an emergency restraining order is to be obtained for the safety of the victim. To the contrary, Breckinridge was allowed to keep all of his firearms and no restraining order was issued, Chris said.

Pat said that it had been reported in several news sources that Boudreaux, his wife, Breckinridge and his girlfriend had been out to dinner a few nights earlier. Also, according to Chris, Breckinridge personally endorsed Boudreaux's campaign in the 2014 election. The 2014 primary was only six weeks away from the March 14 domestic abuse incident.

At that time, Pat said, the chief was arrested without being questioned or processed for the crime, then immediately bailed out for $50,000.

The next morning the police report was sitting on District Attorney Tim Ward's desk. Ward cited a conflict of interest and sent the case to the Kern County District Attorney.

According to Melissa Allen, of the Kern County District Attorney's office, the case was declined for lack of evidence.

"I have to prove to a jury that the incident happened beyond a reasonable doubt, but there was insufficient evidence," she said.

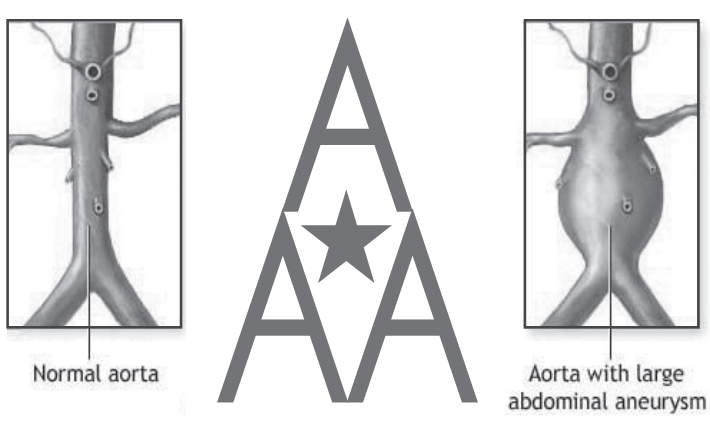
Breckinridge's girlfriend did not press charges.

Chris also said that immediately after Breckinridge's alleged unreported DUI in May of this year, a memo went out to everyone in the department that said, "If anyone is caught talking or speculating on what happened to Chief Breckinridge, you will be fired."

Despite the warning, according to Chris, a Tulare police officer was heard saying, "Look, it is what it is. He (Breckinridge) needs some help."

Dorman is on vacation until October and was unavailable for comment. Tulare City Attorney Martin Koczanowicz stated, for the record, that the city cannot comment on a personnel matter.

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm



SCREENING

Saturday, October 10

8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

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You should consider being screened for AAA. Risks are greater for people who have smoked at any time in their life.

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Registration fee:
FREE
Appointments are required.

Kaweah Delta Medical Center
A division of Kaweah Delta Health Care District

Walk N Bike

Continued from p. 1

The goal is to better connect cities and address the needs of rural residents, who use these active modes of transportation, Brady said. Active modes of transportation are those that require physical activity, rather than a motorized vehicle.

"Active transportation engages people in healthy physical activity," according to the TCAG website.

For many, walking or biking transportation are utilized out of necessity, but for some they are used for health and fitness.

According to the TCAG website, "Active transportation has many benefits. The main ones can be grouped into five broad categories: health, mobility, neighborhood livability, economy & environment."

The hope is to provide and meet some of the needs or improvements for active transportation through state grant funds.

"We are trying to get more ways for people to get from point A to point B," Brady said. "But, we will be looking at recreational use as well."

With this phase, TCAG is beginning a more active outreach plan to the community. An online survey should be posted to the TCAG website in the near future, Brady said, and at least one workshop, and multiple public hearings and meetings are being planned. The committee wants to especially hear from those in rural communities and underserved areas of the county.

"We want feedback from the communities and the public as well," Brady said.

Another aspect is to increase accessibility of combined modes of transportation. Many people may walk or bike to a bus stop, take the bus to near their destination, and walk or bike the final leg, Brady said. While many, if not most, county and city transit buses have bike racks, "which are used a lot," he added, there could be ways to improve the flow.

Plan preparation will take place later this year, after public meetings are held and surveys collected. A combination of existing conditions and needs assessments will be made to develop a 10-year working plan of high-priority projects.

Once written the plan will be available for comment for key players and the public, and eventual approval by the TCAG board to move forward with appropriating funds and project development.

While ease of access is highly important, safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists are key.

"We want to increase safety for everyone," Brady said.

For more information, visit www.tularecog.org. Access the "Getting Around" link for bike paths and information including detailed bike maps from various cities, and bus routes and information.

Educators of the Year to be Honored at the 22nd Annual Confucius' Birthday Celebration

Staff Reports

The 22nd Annual Confucius' Birthday/Educators of the Year Celebration was held on September 24 to honor three of Tulare County's best teachers. For over two decades, the Tulare County Office of Education has partnered with the Central California Chinese Cultural Center to honor teachers on the birthday of the Chinese philosopher, Confucius.

Vicky Kusnierek

Confucius' birthday is an occasion Chinese people around the world use to celebrate great educators. The invitation-only awards program recognized one elementary, middle and high school teacher. This year, the honorees were: Vicky Kusnierek, a fifth-grade teacher at Pleasant View West School in the Pleasant View School District; Krystal Poloka, a seventh- and eighth-grade STEM (science, technology, engineering & mathematics) and eighth-grade science teacher at El Monte Middle School in the Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District; and Dennis Bettencourt, the band director at Redwood High School in the Visalia Unified School District.

Krystal Poloka

"These remarkable educators have a tireless dedication to their students and their schools," said Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. "Their energy and 'above and beyond' attitudes should be an inspiration to all of us."

Elementary School Educator of the Year Vicky Kusnierek is a fifth-grade teacher at Pleasant View School West, which serves the Poplar community west of Porterville. She entered the teaching profession after serving as a volunteer in her own children's classroom. Excited about the learning she saw, she decided to pursue her teaching credential. Once she had obtained it, she resigned her position of 18 years as the business manager for the Porterville Recorder to begin teaching at Pleasant View.

"It really has been fantastic," she said of her new career.

Her superintendent, Mark Ods¬ather, said, "Vicky is the consummate professional. Every day, she strives to make the learning environment in her classroom as rich as possible."

Kusnierek works to make her classroom a safe environment where she can address any challenges on an individual basis with the goal that students will become independent and "create their own learning." While she is academically demanding of her students, Kusnierek says that she wants them to know, "how much I love each one of them. If they know I care, they're going to perform – not just for me, but for themselves."

Kusnierek is also credited for improving the quality of teacher training at Pleasant View.

"Our staff looks to Vicky as a leader," said Odsather. "She is always looking to push herself and the staff around her to become better at what they do. She does this with a humble, positive attitude and an infectious smile."

Dennis Bettencourt

Krystal Poloka of El Monte Middle School is the Middle School Educator of the Year. Poloka began her teaching career as an instructor at Fresno City College. She taught biology for 10 years before discovering that she loved working with middle school students. Colleagues say that Poloka has a way of setting her students at ease and showing them that they can master the science and technology concepts in her classes.

In addition to her eighth-grade science class, Poloka has taken on the challenge of teaching two STEM classes, which integrate science, technology, engineering and mathematics through using robotics and other hands-on activities. She also invests her time in mentoring students through programs such as mathematics, engineering, science achievement (MESA); science Olympiad; and the school's science bowl competitions.

"Krystal is one of those teachers who gives every part of her being to her profession," said Donna Hall, an academics coach at El Monte Middle School. "Her Saturdays are often committed to student competitions or field trips for students to participate in various science and engineering activities."

Poloka's support for her students extends beyond class time. She maintains an open-door policy before and after school and eats her lunch in her classroom each day so that students have a safe and supportive place to go. She also enjoys supporting her students by attending their sports and music performances after school.

"Some students are going to remember Krystal as the teacher who made science fun, while others are going to credit her for getting them interested in the fields of science and technology," added Ms. Hall. "There will be a few, I'm quite sure, who will see Krystal as the person who saved their life."

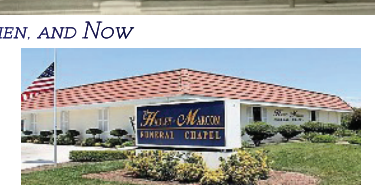
The High School Educator of the Year is Redwood's band director Dennis Bettencourt. Bettencourt has been the band director at Redwood High School for 29 years. Director of Choral Music Mel Carrillo said, "Dennis is an outstanding musician and an exceptional teacher. He knows how to impart his knowledge in a way that students get excited about. Not all musicians can do that."

Bettencourt is credited for his commitment to excellence in performance, and for his ability to create a warm family environment where students can learn, grow and take chances willingly. Redwood Drama Teacher Stacy Galvan said that in his career, Bettencourt has impacted the lives of approximately 5,000 students, and thousands of people in the community.

"We have a saying at Redwood: make it big, do it right, give it class," she said. "Dennis is the epitome of that expression."

Visalia Unified Superintendent Dr. Craig Wheaton said, "Dennis has a deep understanding of the positive influence that music has to engage, humanize, and bring together students. He has made music an important part of his school community—an element that helps form a positive school culture and bind students together through shared experiences."

Then, and Now



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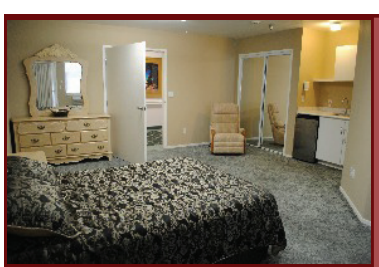

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IBA WEST

Visalia Rescue Mission Adds Online Stores for Thriving Thrift Business

Nancy Vigran

Reporter's Note: A few weeks back this reporter found a listing on Craig's List for filing cabinets. The Visalia Rescue Mission had received a donation of an abundance of them. Since the Valley Voice was in need, a reply was made to the listing and an appointment set to check them out. Valley Voice purchased several units for its archives, but what was also found was an enormous thrift operation.

The Visalia Rescue Mission (VRM) has served the local homeless community since 1984 by providing shelter, meals and programs to aid those in need. Its thrift business has become a major aspect of fundraising for the Mission.

VRM has two well-known thrift stores in Visalia – Rescued Treasurers on Mooney Boulevard and Simply Chic Boutique, downtown on Main Street. But there is also has an aggressive online component which includes Craig's List, eBay and Amazon.

Jennifer Mejia is the thrift marketing coordinator. She is responsible for all listings on the three online sites, as well as promotion for the stores through Facebook and other social media outlets. Her job, which was created in January of this year, is diversified and takes her in different directions every work day.

Michael Jollitt, the book pricer for the Visalia Rescue Mission's thrift business, checks current pricing and rating for potential sale on a textbook, determining it should be considered for an Amazon listing. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

"I enjoy it a lot," she said. "There's a lot about it that's fun and it's challenging. Plus, I get to work with great people."

Mejia started with VRM last year at the Simply Chic Boutique. She had heard about the possible marketing coordinator position being developed and was asked if she would like to fill it. She jumped at the opportunity.

Mejia has enjoyed thrifting since junior high school.

"In junior high, most girls like what is new, not vintage," she said.

But Mejia was not like most girls, and her interest brought her into her new career.

While prior to 2015 VRM did have an eBay store, there was no one person dedicated to working it before Mejia started the job in January. Since then, all VRM online stores have vastly grown.

The Amazon store has more than 400 books listed. It is Mejia's responsibility to list all of them before she ships them to an Amazon warehouse, where they will be shipped when purchased. She also does all eBay listings, which she ships herself to any buyer within the US, or to an eBay shipping outlet, if someone should have the winning bid from outside the country. If Mejia feels that something is better suited for local sale, but does not really fit into either Rescued Treasurers or Simply Chic's potential inventory, she may just list it on Craig's List.

She has to be flexible and adaptable as she may not know what change may occur in any given hour of a day. When a large number of filing cabinets was donated to the mission, she quickly listed them on Craig's List. She spends much time checking and answering her e-mails for this type of listing as well as questions regarding eBay listings. When items are listed on Craig's List, she sets appointments with potential buyers to come view the items at the VRM warehouse, where her office is located.

"Craig's List is more instant," she said, in that people respond quickly and set appointments. This can be time-consuming for her, more so than responding to potential eBay buyers.

When a stack of books has accumulated, time-permitting, she sits down for Amazon listings and ships them off to clear her desk. EBay listings can be made one at a time, in her spare time.

But every item listed anywhere needs to have a competitive price set. This takes research.

"Google has become my friend," Mejia said. "These days, with the internet, there is no excuse (not to know the value of an item). But there is a supply and demand issue too. Much is calculated into an item price."

Within the warehouse, each type of item has assigned price workers. These VRM employees become familiar with their type of item and what the potential worth might be. Different price workers are set for housewares, books, clothing, shoes and handbags, toys, appliances and furniture. These men and women also look out for a potential valuable find to draw to Mejia's attention. Most of these items, if appropriate and shippable, are designated for eBay, especially designer bags and shoes.

Amazon provides a continual updated pricing guide that provides potential prices for books according to popularity and condition. The VRM has a handheld scanner that is regularly updated with the latest Amazon evaluation lists.

"Before we started doing this, expensive textbooks would just sit on the shelf at Rescued Treasurers," Mejia said.

Visalia Rescue Mission's Thrift Marketing Coordinator Jennifer Mejia chooses items she feels will sell well on eBay, Craig's List or Amazon and stores them in her office. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

Now, when they fit into the VRM's ranking requirements, they end up listed on Amazon.

The VRM thrift business employs 55 people, part and full time, including the pricers and sorters, delivery personnel and store employees along with Mejia. Current Mission Life-Change Academy students assist as a part of their work study program.

Donations are accepted at the warehouse as well as donation bins around Visalia and Tulare. Donations are also picked up free within the area, with morning pickups available Wednesday-Friday, and afternoon pickups on Monday, Tuesday and Friday.

VRM also has a vast recycling business which includes electronics and non-operational appliances. However, some items that are not acceptable as donations for resale or recycling include: tires, mattresses, florescent light bulbs, car seats or cribs, used toilets or sinks and cabinets.

All donated items are sorted in the warehouse, cleaned and priced or designated for recycling there. Trucks regularly transport items for sale to Rescued Treasurers and Simply Chic Boutique.

"It's fluid," Mejia said.

"We want to do the best that we can for the Mission," she said, "and to honor the donation."

Mejia said that each physical store has its regular customers with "some who stop in every day, just to see what is new."

Likewise, the eBay and Amazon storefronts have repeat customers and 100% feedback ratings, she said.

Lead pricer, Robin Baker, has worked for VRM for four years. A Mission Life-Change Academy graduate, she enjoys the people she works with and giving back to her community.

"I love it here," she said.

For the Rescue Mission and so many people who enjoy shopping, thrift is here to stay.

"The joy of thrifting is somebody finding something they need or want," Mejia said.

That joy should continue well into the future.

Rescued Treasurers is located at 2523 S. Mooney Boulevard. Simply Chic Boutique is located at 100 E. Main Street. The warehouse is at 500 E. Race Street.

The VRM eBay store is located at http://www.ebay.com/usr/rescuemissionthrift. The VRM Amazon store is located at http://tinyurl.com/rescueamazonstore

To schedule a pickup of donations, call (559) 730-3180.

This is part one of a two-part series on the Visalia Rescue Mission. Watch for the next story on what the Mission does within the community and its other fundraising activities in the next issue of the Valley Voice.

Lead Line Pricer Robin Baker sorts items in the Visalia Rescue Mission warehouse with the assistance of a Mission Life-Change Academy helper. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

Briefly...

PC FOUNDATION OFFERS ONLINE GIVING

The Porterville College Foundation would like to announce the capability for online donations is now active on the foundation website at http://home.portervillecollege.edu/foundation/index.html.

Members of the public can now click the buttons on the right side of the foundation webpage with secure payment options through Paypal.com. Donors can specify parameters for the gift by clicking one of four donation buttons: Scholarships, General, Special Activities & Events or Athletics.

All gifts are taxdeductible. For more information on the various types of donations, please call Carol at the PC Foundation Office at (559) 791-2319.

The Porterville College Foundation supports Porterville College in developing activities, programs and facilities to the best interest of students; actively solicits gifts, bequests and other income and demonstrates prudent fiduciary responsibility in the administration of those funds.

For questions regarding the Porterville College Foundation please call (559) 7912319 or email cbodine@portervillecollege.edu.

KAWEAH DELTA HOSPICE TO HOST GRIEF WORKSHOP FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR GUARDIANS

Kaweah Delta Hospice will host a free grief workshop for children and their parents or guardians on Tuesdays from October 6-November 10.

The Footsteps Grief Workshop will take place from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at Kaweah Delta Hospice, 900 W. Oak Ave., Visalia.It is for children ages 4-18 who have had a significant personal loss including parents, grandparents and/or siblings.

The workshop is a safe place for children to talk about their feelings and learn to handle them in positive ways. Parents and guardians will learn the tools their children are learning so they can work together to grow from their loss.

To register for the workshop, call 733-0642 or e-mail hospicegrief@kdhcd.org.

Kaweah Delta Hospice is a not-for-profit healthcare organization dedicated to helping patients with end-of-life comfort care wherever they live in Tulare County - at home, in a residential care facility, or at a skilled nursing facility. The organization works to relieve pain and other symptoms, as well as provide emotional support and spiritual counseling.

Patients and their families are offered a variety of services designed to cover every aspect of their lives including a physician, a nurse, a home health aid, a chaplain, a social worker and bereavement follow up.

WHCCD ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS SERIES GATHERS LEADERS TO ADDRESS DROUGHT, JOB CREATION

Essential Elements, WHCCD's premier public and private policy series, will continue on October 8 with *Shifting Ground: Adapting the San Joaquin Economy to a Changing Climate.*

This fourth session in the series will focus on topics including job creation, economic development and career and technical education and feature a slate of informative speakers including Lynda Resnick, Vice-Chair and Co-Owner of The Wonderful Company.

The daylong event will connect state and San Joaquin Valley public and private leaders to analyze issues affecting the region and spur actions toward addressing those problems. Attendees will leave the event with a list of goals and action items.

Other speakers will include: Tim Rainey, Executive Director of the California Workforce Development Board; Joe Del Bosque, farmer and member of the California Water Commission; Lance Donny, CEO of OnFarm Services; Art Sponseller, President and CEO of Hospital Council of Northern and Central California; and Glenda Humiston, Vice President of the University of California Division of Ag and Natural Resources.

Panels and discussions will be held on a variety of subjects throughout the day, including job creation and economic changes and adaptation.

Panelists include Robert Tse, Economic Development Officer for the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Jim Huston, Undersecretary for the California Department of Food and Agriculture; Marisa Mitchell of Recurrent Energy and many more representatives from agriculture, private industry and the government.

WEST HILLS HOSTS ROBOTICS COMPETITON

Starting in October, area students will once again be able to learn about science and math in a fun setting with the return of the Central California VEX League Robotics Competition to West Hills College. The competition series—with the first event held on Oct. 3 at West Hills College Lemoore— promotes science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education and application, tasking middle and high school students with an engineering challenge centered on robotics.

"Each year the game or challenge changes," said Scott Authier, event planner. "Each year students must redesign and reprogram their robots. I have heard that this year's game or challenge requires a bit more than guess work if students are going to be competitive."

A series of five competitions will be held, four at West Hills College Lemoore and one at West Hills College Coalinga, leading up to a final competition in February. Events will be held from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Oct. 3, Oct. 24, Dec. 12, and Jan. 23 at West Hills College Lemoore and on Nov. 14 at West Hills College Coalinga.

The final competition, on Feb. 20 at West Hills College Lemoore, will result in one to three teams advancing to a state competition that in turn advances the top teams to a world competition.

This year's competition is centered on a game called "Nothing But Net", which is played on a 12 foot by 12 foot square field and pits two alliances of two teams each against one another.

As of mid-September, 22 teams from nine schools were registered to compete. Registration for teams for the Oct. 3 event is open until the end of September. For more information or to register, visit www.robotevents.com/robot-competitions/vex-robotics-competition/re-vrc-15-3562.html.

Questions can be directed to Scott Authier at (805) 709-1422 or sauthier1@mac.com.

This event is sponsored by Chevron, PG&E, Rec Foundation, Vex Robotics, West Hills Community College District and SMI (The Small Manufacturers' Institute).

U.S. HHS RECOGNIZES TRMC FOR ORGAN DONOR ENROLLMENT

Tulare Regional Medical Center is among a select group of hospitals and transplant centers nationwide recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for reaching gold, silver, or bronze levels of achievement by conducting activities that promoted enrollment in state organ donor registries. The hospitals are part of the national Workplace Partnership for Life Hospital Campaign, sponsored by HHS's Health Resources and Services Administration.

Tulare Regional Medical Center's awareness and registry campaigns educated staff, patients, visitors, and community members on the critical need for organ, eye, and tissue donors and thereby increased the number of potential donors on the state's donor registry. The hospital earned points for each activity implemented during Phase IV of the campaign, between Aug. 1, 2014, and April 30, 2015, and was awarded Silver Recognition by HRSA.

Of the 1,658 hospitals and transplant centers enrolled in the campaign, 736 were awarded recognition during this phase of the campaign. These numbers represent a 29 percent increase in enrollment and a 56 percent increase in recognition over Phase III, and, according to HRSA, are "a tribute to the work that so many have dedicated to this effort. Most important, since launching in 2011, the campaign has added more than 350,000 donor enrollments to state registries around the country, far surpassing the original goal of 300,000."

This campaign is a special effort of HRSA's WPFL designed to mobilize the nation's hospitals to increase the number of those registered as potential organ, eye, and tissue donors.

The campaign unites donation advocates at hospitals with representatives from their organ procurement organizations, Donate Life America state teams, and state hospital associations. Working together, teams leverage communications resources and outreach efforts to proactively promote the critical need for donors.

ELIGIBILITY FOR CALIFORNIA WATER SERVICE'S DRAWING BEGAN WITH SEPTEMBER 23 BILL

California Water Service's (Cal Water) Visalia-area customers can now determine their eligibility and number of entries into Cal Water's $500 "save and win" drawing, as bills dated September 23 began to arrive in mail and email boxes.

Customers who reduce their water use between 32 and 40 percent on their new bills compared to the same period of 2013 will automatically receive one entry into the drawing.

Those who reduce between 41 and 49 percent will receive two entries, while customers who reduce 50 percent or more will receive three entries. Customers' water consumption for this billing period is the month prior to the bill date.

The drawing is open to all Cal Water Visalia District customers, residential and non-residential, who have been continuously receiving water utility service at the same location since May 2013, in order to track water use reductions.

Full terms and conditions are available at www.calwater.com/VISdrawing.

Ten Visalia-area customers will be randomly selected to receive a $500 bill credit to be applied to their account. The drawing will be held November 2, 2015.

"Many of our Visalia customers have done a fantastic job conserving water during this historic drought, and we hope this drawing will give all customers an extra little push to meet, or even exceed, the 32 percent state-mandated reduction requirement for our system," said Cal Water District Manager Scott Bailey. "We encourage all of our customers to reduce as much non-essential water use as possible. We encourage those who have reached a conservation plateau to please reach out to us. We have tools, programs, and rebates in place that can help you reach your water-savings target."

COS AMONG WINNERS OF THE 2015 ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors honored College of the Sequoias (Visalia Campus), Mt. San Antonio College, Orange Coast College and Santiago Canyon College as winners of the annual Excellence in Energy and Sustainability award competition for the implementation of Proposition 39 projects.

This year's awards highlight colleges that implemented energy projects that excelled in meeting the goals of Proposition 39 which include annual energy cost savings, project cost effectiveness, and job creation. More than 120 community college clean energy projects and initiatives were considered for the awards.

Overall Best Project
Small District Category

Winner: Sequoias Community College District, College of the Sequoias - Exterior Lighting Retrofit

College of the Sequoias engaged Southern California Edison's technical support through the California Community Colleges/Investor Owned Utilities partnership in Year 1 of Proposition 39 to help scope an exterior lighting retrofit project at the Visalia Campus. As a result of the initial study done by Southern California Edison and $40,000 in utility incentives, the college was able to undertake a $132,000 project to replace the old high-pressure sodium lights at the Visalia campus, and save 157,310 kWh and roughly $20,000 a year on its electric bill. In addition, this project created construction jobs in the community, as well as apprentice and job training positions.

Viewpoint

A Tale of Two Visitors

Mel Gurtov

What a strange week it was: Pope Francis arriving in the east and President Xi Jinping arriving in the west. One had just come from preaching in Cuba in the wake of US-Cuba normalization of relations, which the Vatican was instrumental in arranging; the other had come from preaching order in China—in the markets, in the streets, and in the communist party—in the wake of mounting U.S. criticism of Chinese cyberattacks and human-rights violations. The pope offered a moral message linked to preservation of freedom, support for immigrants, and hopes to save the earth's environment, while China's president reassured the titans of U.S. technology and other businesses of his country's economic strength. Profit or morality, obligations to growth versus obligations to people and the future—a quick description of the crossroads at which the world stands.

Francis is often praised for being humble, modest, and—as President Obama put it—for having "generosity of spirit." While the Vatican can be as opaque as Zhongnanhai (Chinese Communist Party headquarters in Beijing), Francis clearly enjoys being with ordinary people and speaking on their behalf. Since being anointed pope, he has constantly spoken of the need to fight poverty, the links between poverty and environmental destruction, and the excesses of capitalism. Xi, a mysterious and secretive figure who struggles to present himself as a man of the people, is busy cracking down on lawyers, protesters, journalists, and other actual or potential troublemakers. To me this repression suggests an insecure leader determined above all to protect the party-state's power. (The contrast may also reflect their different backgrounds—Francis, whose father emigrated from Italy to escape Mussolini; Xi, from a family within the communist party elite that was victimized by the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution.)

Both men head a huge bureaucracy and seem determined to clean houses marked by major scandals. But Xi's anti-corruption campaign has been accompanied by protection and promotion of the financial interests of his circle of family and friends. He punishes rivals and wields extraordinary control over all major policy levers.

It may seem silly to compare these two visitors, who come with such different leadership responsibilities and represent vastly different constituencies. Still, it is noteworthy that the pope received lavish attention everywhere he went, with enormous crowds and extraordinary media coverage. Xi Jinping, no match for Francis, was practically invisible while Francis was around; and when he did appear in public, protesters had to be kept at a distance from him. As Howard French observes, Chinese leaders have yet to master so-called soft power. Unlike the pope, who always comes across as a real person, with Xi " … everything is scripted. There's little give-and-take. Speeches are full of stock phrases." Instead of getting hugs, Xi got considerable criticism for acts that at the least raise questions about China's respect for basic human rights at home and uncompromising actions abroad (I'm thinking especially of repression in Tibet and unilateral moves—the *Wall Street Journal* called them instances of "Chinese aggression"—to assert China's claims in the disputed South China Sea islands).

What did these two visitors accomplish? The pope, as expected, pushed a mostly progressive agenda that no doubt left Republican leaders gnashing their teeth. After all, as one close observer, Wen Stephenson, has written that Pope Francis "has embraced liberation theology, and its deep critique of structural economic injustice and oppression, with open arms."

China's leader probably paved the way for new high-tech deals and may for the time being have placated Obama by calling for a cooperative approach to cyber security. More significantly, Xi indicated that China, starting in 2017, would implement a cap-and-trade system to deal with carbon emissions from industry—the same idea Obama tried and failed to get Congressional agreement on in 2010. And at the U.N., Xi pledged $2 billion to aid the poorest countries, though it is unclear if the money will be in loans, grants, or debt relief.

Did either visitor leave an indelible mark on this country? Doubtful; but at least we may say of Francis that he impacted the lives of many individuals who were fortunate enough to see or hear him. His call for action on climate change, global poverty, and immigration was insistent and eloquent; it advanced the cause of environmental rights (which he identified as such in his speech at the U.N.) and social justice. President Xi did not bring a hopeful message; he came mainly to do business and vigorously defend Chinese policies. If the cap-and-trade plan on carbon emissions is faithfully implemented nationwide, it would be a worthy accomplishment. But that's a big "if." He and certain people along the Beltway would do well to heed the pope's message in his speech to the U.S. Congress: "If politics must truly be at the service of the human person, it follows that it cannot be a slave to the economy and finance."

"Do Unto Others": Pope Francis' Call to Action

Rev. John Dear

Pope Francis called us to "Hope and healing, peace and justice" as he addressed Congress. "Summon the courage and the intelligence to resolve today's many geopolitical and economic crises," he said. "Our efforts must aim at restoring hope, righting wrongs, maintaining commitments, and thus promoting the well-being of individuals and of peoples. We must move forward together, as one, in a renewed spirit of fraternity and solidarity, cooperating generously for the common good."

With his address to Congress, Pope Francis gave a call to action with a specific "to do" list: End the death penalty, poverty, hunger, rampant capitalism, the exclusion of immigrants, war, the arms trade, environmental destruction.

He offered his call to action by invoking four great Americans: Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton.

With Lincoln, he invoked the great liberator who ended slavery. With King, he invoked the great dreamer who imagined what we could be--more just, respectful, equitable and nonviolent. With Dorothy Day, he called us to end poverty and hunger and pursue social justice and peace. With Thomas Merton, the monk and author, he invited us to the life of contemplative peace, oneness with creation, and the search for God.

In a gentle way, he asked us to use the Golden Rule as our guide. The Golden Rule is mentioned in every religion and cited by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

"Let us treat others with the same passion and compassion with which we want to be treated," he said. "Let us seek for others the same possibilities which we seek for ourselves. Let us help others to grow, as we would like to be helped ourselves. In a word, if we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities. The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us. The Golden Rule also reminds us of our responsibility to protect and defend human life at every stage of its development."

Then he got down to business. End the death penalty, he said emphatically. "I am convinced that this way is the best, since every life is sacred, every human person is endowed with an inalienable dignity, and society can only benefit from the rehabilitation of those convicted of crimes."

Invoking Dorothy Day of New York, he said we need to continue the fight to end poverty and hunger. "I would encourage you to keep in mind all those people around us who are trapped in a cycle of poverty. The fight against poverty and hunger must be fought constantly and on many fronts, especially in its causes."

"I call for a courageous and responsible effort to 'redirect our steps,' and to avert the most serious effects of the environmental deterioration caused by human activity," he said urging us to end environmental destruction. "I am convinced that we can make a difference."

Then Pope Francis invoked Thomas Merton. Merton calls us all to be peacemakers, to make peace with ourselves and with one another. Merton spoke against racism, nuclear weapons, the Vietnam War, and all forms of violence, and he often did this by dialoguing with others.

Invoking Merton's way of dialogue and peace, the Pope invited world leaders to end war. "Being at the service of dialogue and peace also means being truly determined to minimize and, in the long term, to end the many armed conflicts throughout our world. Here we have to ask ourselves: Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society? Sadly, the answer is simply for money. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.

"To imitate the hatred and violence of tyrants and murderers is the best way to take their place," he said. Francis wants us to refuse the money made from war and become peacemakers.

Pope Francis calls each one of us to rise above ourselves and get to work with the task at hand. He urges us to do what we can to end the death penalty, poverty, hunger, exclusion of immigrants, war, greed, the arms trade, and environmental destruction. He calls us to be like Jesus and St. Francis, people of the Golden Rule.

We need a new national and global grassroots movement for peace, justice and nonviolence and that means we all need to get involved. We must rise to the occasion as he has, to take a stand, speak out, take to the streets, and keep moving forward toward a more nonviolent world. My hope and prayer is that all Americans, religious and secular, heed the call and do our part for "hope and healing, peace and justice."

Too Broke to Pay Attention

Tom H. Hastings

When my son was struggling in his late 20s, I'd ask him how he was doing. "Too broke to pay attention," was his quip.

Are we?

Cumulative student debt in the US is $1.2 trillion, by far the highest in total and per student of any country in the world. Students graduate broke and stay that way.

The US military budget is so massive that entire pallets of cash just go missing in places like Iraq and Afghanistan and the Pentagon cannot account for it, nor does Congress worry about it.

The Pentagon, Congress, and the war profiteers would like you to believe the usual lowball figures—which still have the US outspending everyone on Earth on military operations—but those figures ignore huge military budget segments that get buried in Department of Energy (the nuclear arsenal), State Department, Veterans Affairs, NASA, and so forth.

Even the minimalist is maximalist. Take the US Department of Defense budget—listed as $581 billion this year—and subtract the Russian, Chinese, Saudi Arabian, British, French, German, Japanese, Indian, and South Korean military budgets.

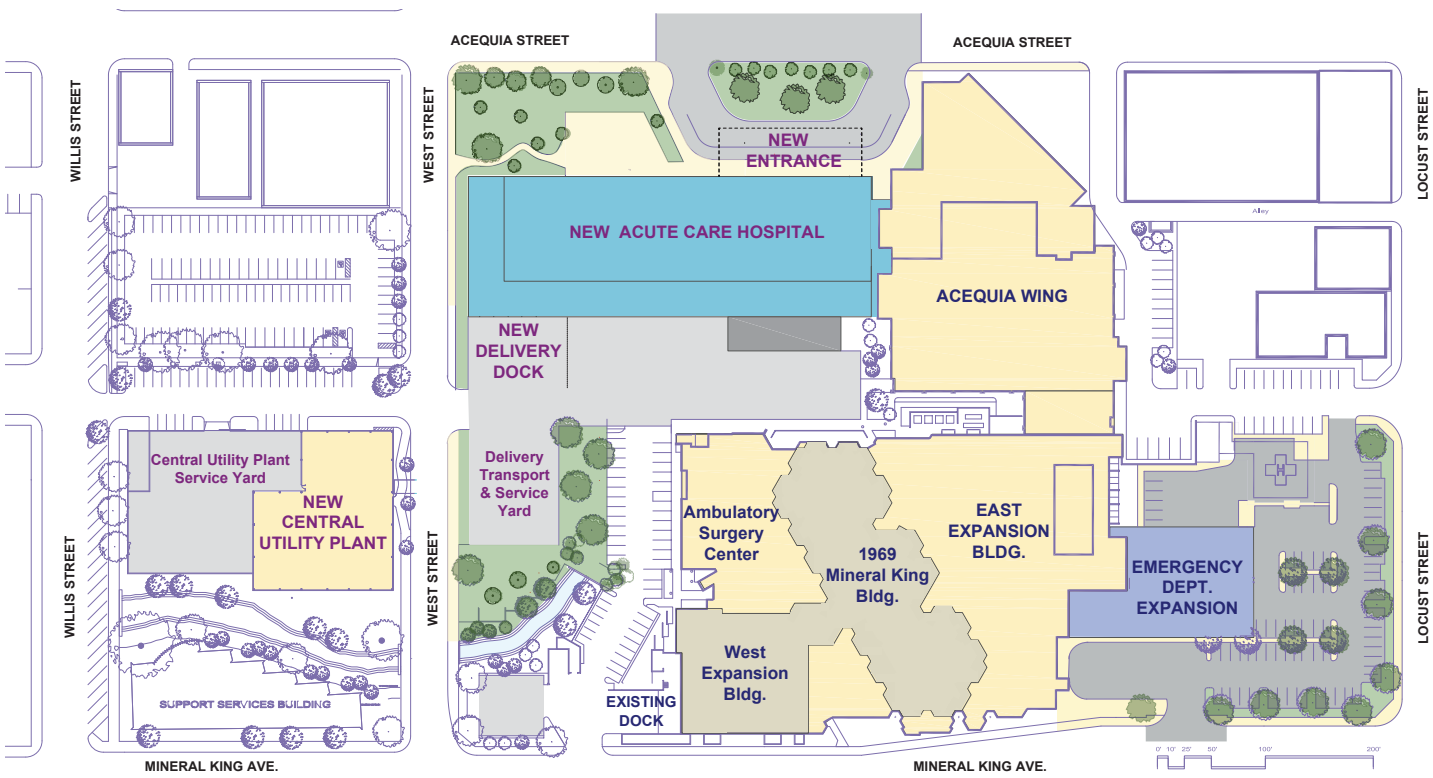
You'd still have $15 billion left to blow on playing Blue Estate or Dark Souls II, virulently violent video games.

Oh—sorry, that's another $15 billion you, the American taxpayer, must pay in this year. Wrong way math.

But what are the stories with legs, with bounce? Deflategate. Tom Brady. Sports and celebrities and rah-rah irrelevancies. Wedge issues like gay marriage

BROKE continued on **16 »**

Comments & Letters



Planning for a New Acute Care Hospital

Lindsay Mann

As I have reported to you in previous communications, California requires that all acute care hospitals meet strict earthquake safety requirements. Kaweah Delta Hospital, built almost 50 years ago, does not meet these stringent standards.

Over the past several months we have spent a great deal of time planning for the development of a *new acute care hospital* to offer life-saving care, handle an increasing number of patients, and recruit and retain highly-qualified employees and medical staff.

As you review this site plan you will notice that a portion of the Mineral King Wing will need to be replaced. Fortunately, our emergency department, labor and delivery, pediatrics, and Broderick Pavilion, the eastern portion of the hospital, can all be retained in their current locations.

The *new acute care hospital* will replace and add to our existing bed capacity and improve other vital services. They include surgery, pharmacy, radiology, dietary and a broad range of other services that are essential to support an acute care hospital, but must also be located in seismically compliant space.

The conceptual planning for our new acute care hospital is nearing completion. In the near future we will finalize our facilities plans, confirm our cost estimates, develop financing plans, and engage necessary architectural and engineering firms to prepare construction documents for approval by the state. We expect construction to begin in 2020 with a projected completion date of 2024.

We are rapidly moving this project from conceptual design to a very real project which will meet required earthquake standards. It will also meet our objective of providing our community with the very best acute care hospital possible.

To summarize, these are the three key points that drive the need for a new acute care hospital:

1. California requires that all acute care hospitals meet strict earthquake safety requirements. Our hospital, built almost 50 years ago, does not meet these stringent standards.
2. Kaweah Delta needs to replace the 50-year-old hospital with a new acute care hospital to be able to offer emergency life-saving care, handle the increasing number of patients, and retain quality nurses and doctors.
3. The new hospital will require multiple funding sources including: Hospital cash reserves, revenue and general obligation bonds, state and federal grants, and fund raising.

This project will require community support for it to come to fruition. This will require not only an understanding of our objectives in pursuing the *new acute care hospital*, but a keen sense of ownership and commitment to see this project developed as a truly vital element of this community's healthcare system.

Lindsay Mann is Chief Executive Officer of Kaweah Delta Health Care District.

"This is a very well researched and thoughtful exploration of the issues surrounding the Hanford City Council and the city administration's efforts to sell the "surplus" land originally designated for Hidden Valley Park.

What I believe is missing in this entire debate is an answer to the question of: "What do the people of Hanford want?"

According to this article we know that "at the January 2014 city council public hearing, 21 people spoke against selling the land and none spoke in favor. The city council got the message and dropped the idea, at least for a few months." In many ways the history of the land and park doesn't matter. What matters is what the people of Hanford want and need.

It's very nice that Mayor Curry asked the neighbors of the park what they wanted (although it would be even better if we had actual documentation regarding their answers). And, it would be nice to know exactly what his questions were when he "spoke" to them. It's very easy to get the answer you want if you know how to ask the right question.

It's very clear that Hanford is way below the best practice of a city it's size with regard to the amount of recreational parks available to it's residents. I believe if you ask ALL the people of Hanford what they want they would agree that selling the land to home developers is NOT what they would want.

Why not ask them and see what they say?"

— ***Brad Lakritz**, on **Hanford's Hidden Valley Debate Continues***

"Leon is not from Hanford he is from Corcoran and came to Hanford to cause trouble. Pannett did not stop Ramos the City Attorney did. Pannett has a history of trying to take credit for things he doesn't do. The letters ended up being signed by fake people but the information in the letters appear to be accurate."

— ***Just Wondering**, on **Hanford Mayor Avoids Ouster***

Send us your Letters to the Editor

3350 S. Fairway Street, Visalia, CA 93277 **By email:** editor@ourvalleyvoice.com

Veteran's Corner

Vietnam Service "Presumptive" Disability Benefits

Joe Wright

VA *presumes* that specific disabilities diagnosed in certain veterans were caused by their military service. VA does this because of the unique circumstances of their military service. If one of these conditions is diagnosed in a veteran, VA presumes that the circumstances of his/her service caused the condition, and disability compensation can be awarded.

The following health conditions are presumptively recognized for service in Vietnam. Veterans with one or more recognized conditions do not have to show that their illness is related to their military service to get disability compensation. VA presumes that their condition is service-connected. Conditions include chloracne, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, soft tissue sarcoma, Hodgkin's disease, porphyria cutanea tarda, multiple myeloma, respiratory cancers including cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea, and bronchus, prostate cancer, acute and subacute transient peripheral neuropathy, type 2 diabetes, and chronic lymphocytic leukemia. Recently added conditions include B cell leukemias such as hairy cell leukemia, Parkinson's disease and ischemic heart disease.

Certain conditions are also recognized for the children of Vietnam veterans. Covered birth defects include a wide range conditions. Eighteen defects are specifically included and others not specifically excluded are covered.

Vietnam veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between 1/9/62 and 5/7/75, and later contracted any of these conditions, or have children with birth defects, should apply for disability compensation benefits. There are no time limits to apply.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran I.D. cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the Web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com/vets.

Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call 582-3211, ext. 2669; or e-mail joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.

COS Welcomes Students to Success Program

Staff Reports

As College of the Sequoias students ease into the first weeks of the Fall Semester, there is a buzz in the hallway outside the Hanford campus Student Success Center. The resident student success coordinator, Ernest Lopez, greets everyone with an ear-to-ear grin. These are the signs of an enhancement of previous programs: COS' Student Success Program (SSP).

SSP serves the provisions of the Student Success Act as well as funding requirements from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Early reviews are encouraging. Eric Baker is a first-time COS student looking primarily for career guidance, "We just started but so far it's been good." Baker says he is discovering available jobs in the area and that he is learning about, "my best qualities for a work environment and finding the right work environment for me." Baker is paying it forward, too, sharing the job openings he learns about with his peers.

Six Student Success coordinators were hired specifically for the program, covering all three COS campuses. The coordinators received comprehensive training from COS' student and academic services departments. Each coordinator is at the helm of the five centers: Hanford, Tulare and three in Visalia including an ESL-specific center. In addition, the program is supported by its director, Juan Vazquez, student success counselors and a senior clerical assistant.

Participation in the program is voluntary. Students who do participate are provided guidance about how best to navigate the educational waters, whether that is through tutoring, mentoring, additional counseling, topical workshops or other services. The program is specifically dedicated to students that fall into the category of disproportionately impacted groups; that definition is based upon those categories of the college's student demographic that fall below Student Success Scorecard rates of achievement.

The COS Athletics Student Success Center is just about to hold an orientation for students new to the program. Photos courtesy COS.

Students take advantage of a quiet moment in the Hanford Student Success Center.

Broke

Continued from p. 14

and sad Kentucky officials. And these are stories from the "thinking person's" media, God help us. Fox and many other outlets are beyond cringeworthy. Yet that is what we pay attention to.

Is our system too broke? Is our media too broke? Is our democracy too broke? Some think so. They either go apathetic or want to "burn it down."

Neither is appropriate, adaptive, or functional. We have agency, both as individuals and in concert with each other. Understanding this produces a positive feedback loop with excellent consequences; failing to understand this produces positive feedback loop with negative outcomes.

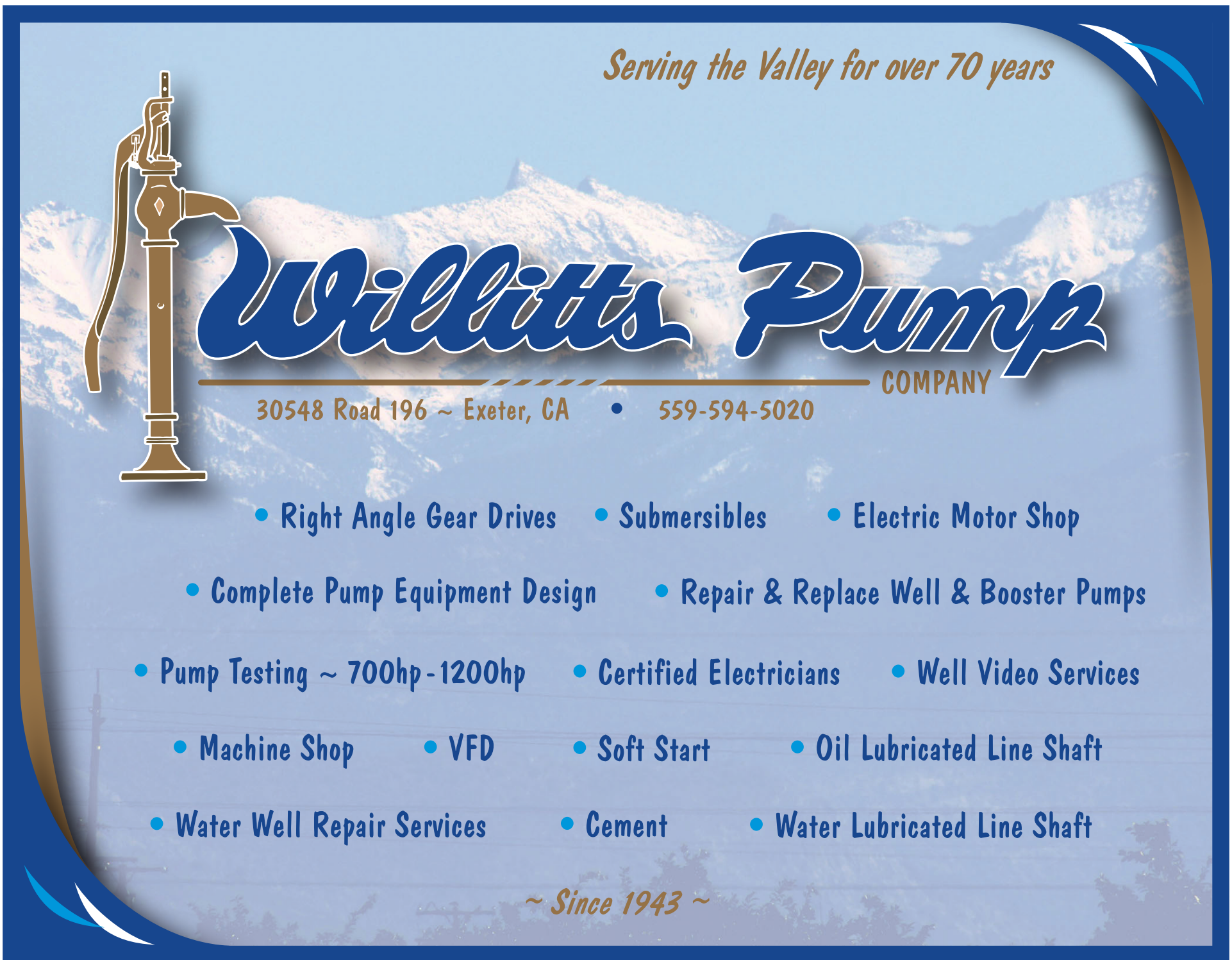
When we refuse to commit violence, we do not add to the level of violence in the world.

When we reuse, recycle, and repurpose we do not add to the level of toxics and garbage plaguing our planet.

Pay more attention to your local independent media than to megacorporate media. Join with others to question poor priorities that not only cause us to be fiscally broke but bring the societal systems to a state of brokenness.

When we meet and organize and get involved in public policy questions with growing numbers of our neighbors, we begin to create the shift in societal practice that we need to save this beautiful blue and green planet and all who live here. We can enrich our lives and fix our lives so that we are never again too broke to pay attention.

Dr. Tom H. Hastings is core faculty in the Conflict Resolution Department at Portland State University and is Founding Director of PeaceVoice.



Valley Voice
Valley Scene
1 October, 2015

Russian Grand Ballet's "Swan Lake" at the Visalia Fox Theatre

Staff Reports

The Russian Grand Ballet and Artbeat, Inc. are pleased to announce the performance of Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake" in Visalia, on Wednesday, October 7, 7:30 pm at the Fox Theatre. The Kiev-based Russian Grand Ballet brings the classic ballet to life with Russia's brightest ballet stars.

The Russian Grand Ballet was founded by and incorporated graduates from the Great Russian choreographic schools of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kiev. The principal dancers of the company came from the upper ranks of the great ballet companies and academies. Today, the Russian Grand Ballet Theatre is its own institution, with more than 50 brilliant dancers. Its artistic director, Constantine Pinchuk, is highly dedicated to the timeless tradition of classical Russian Ballet.

The US tour features a company of 43, with 38 on stage. It has established a reputation for talent and versatility and has toured the world with both full-length traditional ballets and shorter 'divertissements.' The four acts of the original "Swan Lake" were compressed into three for this rendition without a compromise on the plot, presenting a beautiful romantic tale that is very well-received by the audience. The Russian Grand Ballet repertoire contains such masterpieces of world choreography as: Giselle, Swan Lake, Nutcracker, Don Quixote, Sleeping Beauty and others.

"There's a good reason why Swan Lake is so often called the 'ballet of all ballets' – the combination of pure romanticism, a story about love and deception and Tchaikovsky's famous music continue to reach new generations of audiences," says Pinchuk. "It is an incredible opportunity for both the younger and older generations to experience the arts and enjoy a ballet classic."

Based on Russian folklore and German legend, "Swan Lake" follows a heroic young prince as he works to free the beautiful swan maiden from an evil spell. The ballet is in three acts with two intermissions, with choreography by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov, and libretto by Vladimir Begichev and Vasily Getzer. Running time is approximately two hours and 30 minutes.

The Honored Artist of Ukraine, Olga Kifyak, will be dancing Odile/Odette (both the Black Swan and White Swan roles), with Eugeniy Svetlitsa as Prince Siegfried and Ivan Kozlov (who has been performing continuously alongside with Ulyana Lopatkina) as the Prince's friend. Alisa Voronova, Sergey Kononenko and Anna Surmina will be performing Swan Lake Pas de Trois for the 25-city American tour.

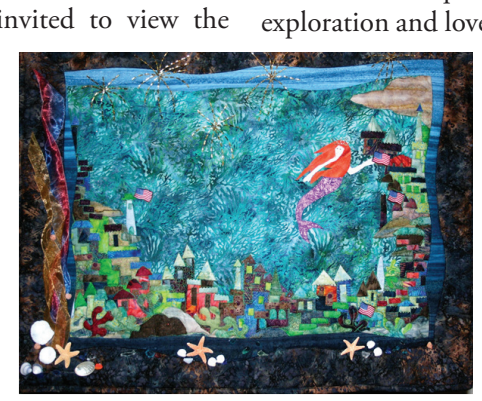
Tickets are available for purchase through lincolntheater.com, by phone at 559 625 1369, or in person at the Visalia Fox Theatre Box Office.

More information is available online at russiangrandballet.com and www.artbeatshows.org For interviews, photographs or other assistance, please contact Tara Shisler @ tara@artbeatshows.org.

"Dancing Threads" Prances to PC

Staff Reports

The public is invited to view the exhibition "Dancing Threads" featuring contemporary quilts by local artists from now through October 23 at the Porterville College Art Gallery. The public is also invited to the reception from 5-7pm on Thursday, October 1.


A quilt by Gail Cosart.

These artists will be showing, through often non-traditional materials and methods, quilts that express their exploration and love for the quilting medium.

"I love fabric and have many more projects than time," artist Gail Cosart said.

Cosart said she had an early interest in sewing and quilting, receiving her first sewing machine when she was

THREADS continued on **19 »**

Scarecrows Take Over Exeter

Stefan Barros

Scarecrows will fill the neighborhoods of Exeter with the commencement of the Fourth Annual Exeter Scarecrow Contest, Thursday, October 1. The contest, running throughout the month and put on by the Exeter Chamber of Commerce, is being expanded from local chamber-member businesses and organizations, to city-residents, who will now get a chance to show off their scarecrows.

Chamber Director Sandy Blankenship says that she expects this year to more successful than the three past years that the contest has been held.

"The first we did this, we had about 25 scarecrows, then the second year we had 50, and 50 also last year," she said. "We're just hoping to build this up. We're even doing a themed contest this year which is 'Storybook Scarecrows.'"

One of the first scarecrows appearing in Exeter this fall is the Exeter's Courthouse Gallery and Art Museum's entry, "I Want to be a Real Boy." Courtesy/Exeter Chamber of Commerce

Blankenship gave a little bit of background about how and why this Scarecrow Contest started.

"One of our citizens went to Cambria and saw their contest that they put on, and thought it would be a good idea to have a contest in Exeter," she said. "That really helped us get started."

It was longtime chamber supporter, Betsy Peterson, who visited Cambria and brought the idea back to Exeter. On behalf of the Garden Club of Exeter, also in conjunction with the Boys and Girls Club, she will be entering into the contest for the third year in a row.

"Going to Cambria and seeing their scarecrows, I was just fascinated with what they did," she said. "When I found out Exeter also wanted to do this, I told them about my time in Cambria."

"We are getting more and more people every year that want to do it, and more people are starting to see what's happening here," she added.

At press time, there are 27 businesses with entries into the contest. There are three citizens also with entries so far.

For chamber members, Blankenship said the first-, second- and third-place finishers will be rewarded, but the top finisher will have the most prized possession at the end. Winners in this category will be announced on November 12, after displaying their scarecrows the entire month of October.

The new resident category will allow entrants to bring their scarecrows to Exeter's Fall Festival on Saturday, October 10, where the public is invited to visit the Scarecrow Station and vote for their favorite. The winner in this category will be announced toward the end of that day. Entrants must preregister for the event.

For the chamber member's category, "there will be custom ribbons for the

SCARECROW continued on **23 »**

Tastemakers Rock Festival to Benefit Local Youth Music

Dave Adalian

Music fans can expect a heavier rock-n-roll groove at the second annual Tastemaker Festival on Saturday, October 17 says Aaron Gomes, head of the Sound N Vision Foundation, the organization behind the event.

"We built a show that was more of a vibe," Gomes said of the event at Visalia Rawhide Stadium. "There's a connective fiber through it. It's guitar driven. This is a very fluid lineup. These bands fit together well."

Readers of the Valley Voice can get VIP tickets for $20 by mentioning the paper's name when they purchase tickets in person at Velouria. Only 100 VIP tickets are available.

The day of music, food, beer and wine will feature seven bands, all of which are Valley locals, with the exception of headliner Wand, an up-and-coming Los Angeles-based garage psych quartet that right now is in the middle of a two-month European tour. Visalia will be its first performance back in the States.

"There's a real surge in music in the Valley right now. It's great to be featuring them," Gomes said. "Wand is doing incredible things in the live setting. It's very up tempo. It's just good-time music for outdoors, very kinetic."

FESTIVAL continued on **24 »**

Education

COS Invites the Community to the 2015 Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

Staff Reports

College of the Sequoias' 2015 Hall of Fame ceremony will be held Thursday, October 8, at 5:30pm in the Dr. S. Thomas Porter Field House of the Visalia campus.

The event, including a dinner and the ceremony, is open to the public.

COS is proud to celebrate the following honorees, one of the highest awards presented by the college: Connie Conway, Chuck Forsythe, Tom Gilcrest, and five members of the 1987 McFarland cross country team.

Hall of Fame induction is reserved for those that have made significant contributions to the betterment of COS, the community and society in general. The contributions take many forms, but always reflect positively on the college.

Connie Conway: A COS alumna, Connie Conway is a Republican politician from California who has represented the area in which she grew up and attended school. She was the minority leader in the California State Assembly. Conway is the first woman to serve as GOP assembly leader since 1981. Prior to serving in the Assembly, Conway served as a Tulare County Supervisor from 2000 until 2008. She was recently appointed by Governor Jerry Brown to a position on the California Community Colleges Board of Governors.

Chuck Forsythe: Chuck Forsythe attended COS from 1974 to 1976 and graduated Fresno State University with a BA in Biological Sciences. While attending Fresno State, Forsythe obtained his insurance license to help his father run the family business, Forsythe Insurance Agency, Inc. After graduation, he was selected from a list of national candidates for a special scholarship program with a large life insurance company. He continued his education by obtaining his Chartered Life Underwriter and Chartered Financial Consultant designations from the American College of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. He has served on the Agents Advisory Board for Blue Cross of California and continues to run Forsythe Insurance which his father started in 1966. Forsythe has received recognitions over the years for his involvement as Hanford Distinguished Citizen of the Year, Lifetime in Business Award, Rotarian of the Year (1997) and YMCA Volunteer of the Year.

Tom Gilcrest: Tom Gilcrest is one of the winningest coaches in COS Athletics history. During his leadership, the college had one of the most successful athletic programs in the state. In nine seasons as the men's basketball coach, he produced a 143-110 record with two championships. Gilcrest coached both the men's and women's basketball teams from 1983-1984 with twin championships and a 52-13 record. From 1986-1987 was the year of the perfect record of 35-0 and the first ever state championship for the COS women's program. The following season, the women's team won its first five games to extend the school record to 40 consecutive wins.

In 1987, Tom was featured in the May edition of Sports Illustrated "Faces in the Crowd" in recognition of their winning season. Gilcrest built a reputation of one of the state's top women's coaches. In 15 seasons, his teams had a 399-93 record which converts to an 81% success rate.

A special, group induction will also be held that evening. Jose Cardenas, Damacio Diaz, David Diaz, Johnny Samaniego and Thomas Valles Sr. of the 1987 McFarland High School cross country team will be honored as a group. These five members, recently depicted in Walt Disney Pictures' "McFarland, USA," attended and competed for COS before transferring to four-year colleges. As first-generation college graduates, the team members brought a level of state and national notoriety to their sport, their hometown and to COS. McFarland High School and College of the Sequoias cross country and track teams continue to have a beneficial relationship, for which much credit is owed to coaches Jim White and David Bronzan.

Tickets are $50 and may be purchased through October 6, online at COS.edu/Foundation or by phone by calling (559) 730-3861.

Great Conversations

Henri Poincaré and the End of Science

Joseph R. Teller

When we make statements such as "science has shown us that…" or "according to science…," what, exactly, are we invoking? Presumably, when we say "science" in this sense, we mean something like "the claims made by professional scientists who use the scientific method to make hypotheses and draw conclusions about natural phenomena."

But what are the real ends, or goals, of science? How do scientists select phenomena for their investigations? And is there ever such a thing as "pure science" completely divorced from politics or the financial resources that make much of contemporary scientific inquiry possible?

These are questions that French mathematician Henri Poincaré explores at length in his book *The Value of Science* (1905), excerpts of which the Great Conversations group discussed at our recent meeting.

Poincaré begins with an interrogation of basic scientific method: what is a "scientific fact," and how do scientists select the facts with which they work? After developing a working definition—"facts," he argues, "are those which may serve many times; these are the facts which have a chance of coming up again"—Poincaré then claims that the true scientist, once he or she has developed a "rule," or theory of a given set of facts, will "seek the cause where this rule has the greatest chance of failing."

Like Karl Popper's doctrine of falsification a few decades later, Poincaré's idea is that the scientist works to disprove hypotheses on their way to ascertaining scientific truth. Poincaré is visionary in this articulation of scientific principles that shortly will become the hallmarks of modern scientific method.

But Poincaré claims that science has a deeper *telos*: "The scientist," he claims, "does not study nature because it is useful; he studies it because he delights in it, and he delights in it because it is beautiful." Poincaré does not mean that nature is aesthetically beautiful; it is "intellectually beautiful," a beauty "which comes from the harmonious order of the parts and which a pure intelligence can grasp."

Ideally, science pursues intellectual truth, which is synonymous with intellectual beauty—which for Poincaré, is a mathematical beauty. So committed is Poincaré to this vision of science as a pursuit of intellectual truth that he also claims that moral and scientific truth are similar, "because the same reasons make us love them and because the same reasons make us fear them."

This is likely a point that modern science would disagree with vehemently—isn't it obvious, after all, that science and morality do not intersect?—but it is a claim that is vital for Poincaré's argument. For if true science is a pursuit of intellectual truth and beauty, this end, or *telos,* is already an ethical decision: ethics "shows us to what goal we should aspire," while science "teaches us how to attain it."

Outside of this relation, ethics and science "can never meet. There can no more be immoral science than there can be scientific morals." This statement is strange and discordant to us moderns. But presumably, for Poincaré, if a scientific project seeks unethical ends—the destruction of other human beings, say, or better biological warfare agents—it is by definition not true science, for its end is no longer the attainment of intellectual truth and beauty, but something else entirely.

Whether a modern reader finds Poincaré's vision prescient or dated, it is clear that *The Value of Science* demands we ask profound questions about what science is. And just as importantly, it asks us to ponder whether science that is motivated by other goals—the acquisition of money, the forwarding of an ideology, the destruction of other people—can ever be true, just, beautiful, or good.

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Don Edwards Returns to Mavericks

Staff Reports

Mavericks Coffee House is proud to announce the return of Don Edward, who they consider as family. Edwards is one of the most sought after Western music entertainers in the business. As a boy, he gravitated to the movies of Tom Mix and Ken Maynard, and read the books by Will James.

A songster, historian, author, songwriter, musicologist, actor, accomplished guitarist with a guitar named after him, yodeler extraordinaire and a multiple award-winning recording artist. Don was also nominated for a Grammy award along with Peter Rowan for High Lonesome Cowboy (2002); and appears on the Grammy-award-winning Folk album - Other Voices, Other Rooms by Nanci Griffith (1994).

Edwards plays at Mavericks Coffee House on Wednesday, October 7 at 7pm. Tickets are $35 and available for presale at the coffee house, 238 East Caldwell Avenue, Visalia.

69th Annual Fatima Celebration

The 69th Annual Fatima Celebration honoring our Lady of Fatima will be held Saturday and Sunday, October 3 and 4.

Every evening, beginning Monday September 28 thru Friday October 2 at 7pm the Novena and recitation of the Rosary at St. Aloysius Church.

2015 Fatima Queen Tyler Ribeiro, 15, and attendants Avery Faria, 13, (l) and Kassidy Rose, 16

Saturday, October 3 at 8pm, the Candlelight Procession will go from St. Aloysius to Tulare Divino Espirito Santo Hall, where the presentation of past presidents, past queens, and also the crowning of the 2015 Queen and her attendants will take place, followed by a presentation of traditional folkloric dancers from students of the three Tulare High Schools, followed by a dance until midnight.

Sunday October 4th the annual parade occurs with local queens, their attendants and courts and many participating delegations from cities throughout California, also the Tulare Union, Tulare Western and Tulare Mission Oak High School bands along with a Portuguese Band will provide the music. The parade will leave TDES at 10am and proceed to St. Aloysius Church to participate at 11:15 Mass, then will return to TDES where the traditional Sopa lunch will be in progress, followed by the big auction Sale, bazar, game and food booths etc.

All proceeds go to St. Aloysius School, located at 515 North I Street in Tulare. At 8:30pm the Grand March with queens, attendants, courts and escorts followed by a dance until midnight. Music by DJ Tony Nunes.

Bottom row (left to right): Joker, Sidecar, Bee, Dot (holding Wiggles), Shorty, Cat, Koffee Kate Middle: Scooter, Sparkle, Crash, PJ, Bones, Lyric, Flash, Pooh, Cowgirl, Rebel, Tigger and Sunny Bergen. Courtesy/Lost Girls Motorcycle Club

Lost Girls Motorcycle Club to Host 11th Annual Breast Cancer Ride

Sunny Bergen

The Lost Girls Motorcycle Club was founded in 2006, by Catherine "Cat" Flaherty, Belinda "Bee" Coulson and Cindy "Side Car" Dupuis and is a 501 C3 non-profit corporation.

This ride benefits the Lost Girls Fund at the Kaweah Delta Hospital Foundation and provides mammograms and advanced testing to locals who otherwise could not afford it.

During 2014, the fund provided mammograms to 71 women as well as additional testing to others and donated another $12,000 to the Foundation from that year's fundraising.

The ride this year will begin at the Kaweah Delta Breast Imaging Center, at 4949 W. Cypress, Visalia.

Registration for riders, from 8-10am, is $25 per person, and there will be a "ladies only" route and a men's route. Both rides will end at the Om-Nom-Nom Café in Lemon Cove where lunch will be served. There will be 50/50 drawings, a silent auction and regular raffle prize drawings.

Don't ride a motorcycle? No problem. Come for lunch.

Lunch tickets are $10 and everyone is more than welcome to participate in the auctions and drawings. This event is family friendly and for a great cause.

This year, in addition to various vendors who will be there, The Lost Girls will also have two motorcycles used on the FX show, "Sons of Anarchy."

Opie's bike and the bike Jax rode for his final time will be on display and, for a small donation, fans will be able to take pictures with the bikes.

To register, visit www.lostgirlsmc.com. For more information, call Sunny at (559) 967-3974.

Threads

Continued from p. 17

just two years old. At the age of six she began making her own outfits, and forayed into quilting when she was home with her first child, 25 years ago.

"When my kids got busy with activities the sewing and quilting got put aside to keep up with them and work," Cosart said. "I dusted my sewing machine off when my youngest son graduated high school and ventured into art quilting."

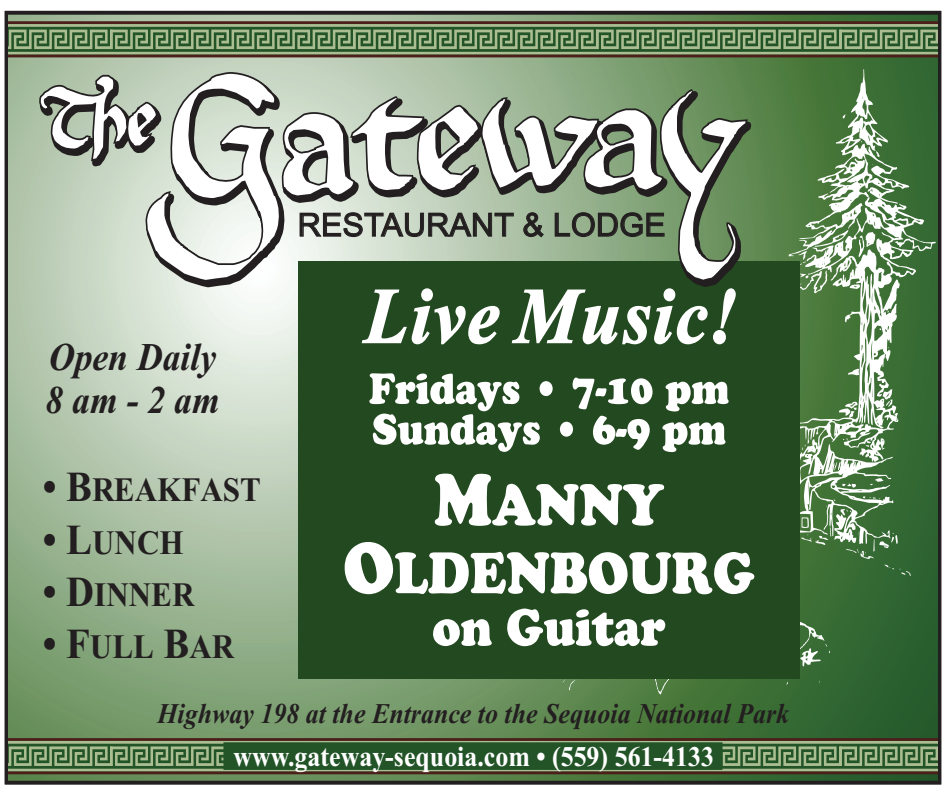
Artist Sue Rowell loves the intricacy and development that does into each piece.

"The fun of quilting is trying different styles and techniques," Rowell said. "For me, quilting is a constant challenge and learning experience. I love the planning stages of linen quilting: finding the linen, deciding on the design, looking for the right fabric for the underlayment, and stitching the design. This applies to all my quilting; I love the planning almost more than the actual quilting," she continued. "It is exciting to go through all of those stages to reach the final result."

Rowell said she loves a variety of quilting styles, but her passion is linen quilts. The numerous artists in this group exhibition display a broad range of subjects and a wide variety of approaches to the quilting medium.

Gallery hours are from 12-2 pm and 4-6 pm, Monday through Thursday. Parking is unrestricted during the time of the reception. For other times, contact the front desk when you arrive to visit the show for a free temporary parking permit.

The Porterville College Art Gallery is located on campus at 100 E. College Ave. For more information, contact Jim Entz, 791-2257.



Calendar

Mondays: Bridge Club, 9:30am-2pm
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. Admission is free. For additional information call: Joan Dinwiddie @ 732-0855

Mondays: Knitters, 10am-12:30pm
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. Everyone's welcome.

Fridays: Women's Morning Bible Study, 9am-Noon
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. For additional information call: 739-9010

Saturdays starting August 22: Dog Obedience Course, 9-10am
6-week Basic Manner course, Exeter City Park. $120/6-week-course. For more information, call (559) 568-8863 or email fortheloveofdg@doglover.com.

1st and 3rd Wednesdays: MOPS meeting, 9-11am
The Tulare Mothers of Preschoolers--MOPS--will be meeting the first and third Wednesday of each month at the Tulare First Baptist Church gym from 9am to 11am. Childcare is provided. There are some costs for attending. For contact information Leslie Elliott is the President her telephone number is (916) 223-1101. This is open to anyone they do not have to attend church.

1st and 3rd Thursdays: Central Valley Tea Party Meetings, 6pm
819 West Visalia Road, Farmersville.

Through October 28: Free Fly Casting Instruction, 6-7pm
Kaweah Fly Fishers are offering fly casting lessons at Del Lago Park in Tulare every Wednesday evening until October 28. Rods and reels will be supplied or you may bring your own.

OCTOBER

October 2: The Annual Lemon Cove Women's Club Yard Sale, 8am
The annual Lemon Cove Women's Club yard sale will be Friday, October 2nd and Saturday October 3rd beginning at 8:00am. No early birds. This is a huge sale including everything from furniture, office supplies, appliances to holiday decorations and crafting items. Outside vendors will be selling their antiques (not including the club's members!) Funds raised go to maintaining the historic Pogue Hotel right on Highway 198 past the Lemon Cove Fire Station. To donate items please call Mary Cloud 597-1416 or Mona Wyatt 359-4465.

October 2: Central Valley Parkinson's Support Group, 10:30am
Central Valley Parkinson's Support Group will meet in the Pre School Center of Visalia United Methodist Church located at 5200 West Caldwell, Visalia, CA. Program: Video Presentation "DAILY LIVING". Lunch: Beans & Cornbreadwww.cvpsg.net or cvparkinsons@gmail.com or 559-280-0301

October 2: Annual Round Up Fundraiser, 6pm
Happy Trails Riding Academy is hosting its 5th Annual Round Up fundraiser Friday, October 2, 2015 at the Happy Trails Riding Academy facility located at 2773 E. Oakdale Avenue, Tulare. A ticket will include a Cowboy BBQ, live music, a wine buy and rider demonstrations. All proceeds of the event will directly benefit the Happy Trails Riding Academy program. Tickets are $30 per person and tables of eight can be reserved for $240. Happy Trails also has sponsorship opportunities available for this event. To reserve your tickets or inquire about sponsorships, please contact the office at (559) 688-8685.

October 2: First Friday Artist Reception for Deanna Saldana, 6-8pm
The Chamber will be celebrating the artwork of Deanna Saldana. Join the Chamber for an open house event at Visalia Chamber of Commerce, 222 N. Garden St. Suite 300.

PLAYING NEXT at THE ENCHANTED PLAYHOUSE!
"TREASURE ISLAND" - Directed by Donald Williams
October 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 2015
Based on the masterful adventure novel by Robert Louis Stevenson Treasure Island is a stunning yarn of piracy on the tropical seas. This unforgettable tale of treachery and mayhem features a host of legendary swashbucklers including the dangerous Billy Bones, the sinister two-timing Israel Hands, the brassy woman pirate Anne Bonney, and the hide...ous evil Blind Pew. At the center is 14 year old Jim Hawkins a boy longing for adventure & the infamous pirate, Long John Silver. Silver's greedy quest for gold is coupled with his affection for Jim. This tale cannot help to win your heart!

Information
http://www.enchantedplayhouse.org/season/1516.html

Tickets
http://www.enchantedplayhouse.org/ticketing/index.html

October 3: Looming, knitting, and crocheting hats tie the community together to provide hope to those who are struggling with cancer, 8am to 2pm
Tucoemas Federal Credit Union will once again open its doors on the first Saturday of October for this event. They will teach others to make a hat by providing yarn, a loom and teachers. Donations of yarn and adult hats are gratefully accepted throughout the year at any Tucoemas branch location in Visalia, Tulare and Porterville. At Tucoemas Federal Credit Union, 2300 W. Whitendale Ave. in Visalia. For information call Sandy at (559) 737-5920.

October 3: Walk To End Alzheimer's, 8am
Walk to end Alzheimer's in Mooney Grove Park. For more information contact Bob Patel at 300-9101.

October 3: Exeter Union High School Alumni Golf Tournament, 8am
The Annual Exeter Union High School Alumni Foundation Golf Tournament will be at the Exeter Golf Course, 510 W. Visalia Rd. Check in is 8 am, $50 per player, includes green fee & tri tip lunch. 5 players per team. Hole sponsorship is $100. For more information, call David at (559) 594-5500.

October 3: 5K Harvest Run/Walk in Visalia presented by Kaweah Delta Health Care District and Visalia Runners, 8am
Harvest Run: Register for 5K Harvest Run/Walk in Visalia presented by Kaweah Delta Health Care District and Visalia Runners at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 3, at The Lifestyle Center, 5105 W. Cypress Ave. Cost: $25 before 5 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 1; $35 day of event from 6:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. Register online at through 5 p.m. on Oct. 1; in person on Oct. 1 before 5 p.m. at The Lifestyle Center, 5105 W. Cypress Ave. or by mail through Monday, Sept. 21 to: Visalia Runners, 444 N. Linwood St., Visalia, CA 93291 (checks payable to Visalia Runners). Information: 741-6004.

October 3: Water-efficient Gardening Workshop, 10am-Noon
At College of the Sequoias Visalia campus. The free workshop will feature representatives from the UCCE Tulare Master Gardener Program and Ewing Irrigation as well as Cal Water conservation professionals.

October 3: Annual Menudo & Pozole Cook-off, 11am-5pm
The Annual Menudo and Pozole Cook-off is held on the first Saturday in October each year and features live entertainment, vendors, games for children and car show. For entry forms, vendor booth information, and sponsorship opportunities, please visit our Menudo & Pozole Cook-off detail page.

October 3: Grandma's House 3rd Annual Gala & Fundraiser, 5:30-10pm
Because of your support, Grandma's House has completed the renovations on our tutoring facility for students in kindergarten through 6th grade. We are now working towards adding a preschool and finally a 7th & 8th grade online math academy. Join us as we strive to make a difference in the lives of local children. We do indeed touch the future and you make it possible. At Heritage Complex, 4500 South Laspina in Tulare. General Admission Tickets $40 each or Table of 8 for $300. For more information call 559-688-2900.

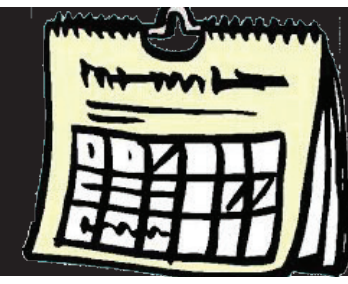
October 3: 10th Annual Sierra View Foundation Gala-A Magical Evening in the French Quarter, 5:30-11pm
Let the good times roll you to the 2015 Dancing with the Sierra View Stars Gala at the Porterville Fairgrounds 2700 W. Teapot Dome. The Dancing with the Sierra View Stars Gala is the most anticipated Central Valley Fundraiser. Members of our local community unite as dancing teams to perform one dance number to raise funds for the Sierra View Foundation. The community can join in the fun by supporting their favorite dance couple by voting and the competition will serve as part of the entertainment for the 10th annual gala. Highlights include a full-course extravagant dining experience, glittering dance competition and special professional entertainment. Limited reservations are available. In just nine years, the gala has raised over $440,000.00 towards projects and equipment for Sierra View Medical Center. Incredible community support has made the Gala one of the premier charity events in Southeastern Tulare County. Tickets: $150 each. To purchase tickets, sponsor the event or for more information, please contact the Sierra View Foundation Office (559) 788-6104 or (559) 788-6124.

October 4: Lost Girls Motorcycle Club 11th Annual Breast Cancer Ride, 8am
The ride this year will begin at the Kaweah Delta Breast Imaging Center, at 4949 W. Cypress, Visalia. Registration for riders, from 8-10am, is $25 per person, and there will be a "ladies only" route and a men's route. Both rides will end at the Om-Nom-Nom Café in Lemon Cove where lunch will be served. There will be 50/50 drawings, a silent auction, and regular raffle prize drawings. To register, go to www.lostgirlsmc.com. For more information, please call Sunny at (559) 967-3974.

October 5: Miss Exeter Coronation at the Faith Tabernacle Family Center, 6pm
Miss Exeter Coronation & Dinner at the Faith Tabernacle Family Center, 515 S. Filbert Rd., Exeter. Miss Exeter is a personal development and scholarship program open to high school juniors and seniors. Candidates are judged on community and school service, academics, poise and personality and the sale of raffle tickets as a fundraiser. The candidates will answer impromptu questions and model in a fashion show. Advance tickets are $20 and are available at the Chamber office in Exeter. For further information, call the Exeter Chamber of Commerce at (559) 592-2919.

October 7: Porterville CHAP "The Lost Libraries of Harappa (and Other Archaeological Fantasies)" 11:30am-12:30pm
Presented by Robert Simpkins Ph.D., Anthropology Professor.

Professor Simpkins links his personal journey as an archaeologist over the past two decades to the story of the mysterious and undeciphered script of the ancient Indus Valley Civilization, revealing how the study of the past is influenced by assumptions, errors, and sometimes outright fantasies.



October 7: VUSD Ribbon Cutting - Redwood Campus, 4-5pm
Please join us In the courtyard of the new building as we celebrate the completed two-story academic building at Redwood High School - made possible thanks to your support of Measure E.

October 7: Pumpkin carving contest and Family Fun Night, 4:30-7pm (Location: Downtown Exeter, Pine and E St.)
The City of Exeter Community Services sponsors the pumpkin-carving contest; Miss Exeter candidates serve as judges. Immediately following the contest, games & activities geared to children from 4-15 are set up throughout the downtown area by businesses. Unlimited game passes $3 per child. Included in the games are ring toss, face painting, apple bobbing, petting zoo, etc. Every child wins a small prize.

October 7: Swan Lake, 7:30pm
The Russian Grand Ballet presents Swan Lake at the Visalia Fox Theatre. Tickets available by visiting foxvisalia.org or by calling 625-1369.

October 8: Exeter Chamber of Commerce Mixer hosted by Bank of the Sierra, 5-6:30pm
Honoring Miss Exeter and Court. Free & the Public is encouraged to attend.

October 8: 2015 COS Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, 5:30pm
College of the Sequoias' 2015 Hall of Fame ceremony will be held in the Dr. S. Thomas Porter Field House of the Visalia campus. The event, including a dinner and the ceremony, is open to the public. Tickets are $50 and may be purchased through October 6, online at COS.edu/Foundation or by phone by calling (559) 730-3861.

October 8: Central Valley High School Showcase, 6-8pm

Bring your children to participate in a free informational evening to meet with over 20 high schools. Are you sure that you know which high school is the best fit for your child? Attend the High School Showcase to learn about all of the options. This is a free event for the community to attend hosted by St. Paul's School. Representatives from over 20 schools will be ready to answer questions and explain the benefits of their institution. The schools vary from private, charter, and boarding school with some associated with different religious denominations. St. Paul's School Chapel, 6101 W Goshen Ave. Visalia.

October 9: Business Seminar Series Sales & Marketing, 3:30-5pm
At the train depot/Lemoore Chamber. Tickets $15 for members, $20 for non-members. For more information call (559) 924-6401.

October 9: Lip Sync Contest in Exeter City Park, 6pm
Lip Sync Contest sponsored by the City of Exeter Community Services Department at Exeter City Park. For more information, call (559) 592-5262.

October 10: 4th Annual Run for Hope, 7-11am
The event consists of a 10K Run and a 2 mile Walk/Run along the scenic St. John's River Trail. All events begin and end in Cutler Park. Benefitting the Visalia Rescue Mission. 7am Registration; 8am 10k; 8:05am 2 mile walk/run. T-shirts guaranteed for pre-registrants. Chip timing provided. Awards & refreshments available. For more information call 740-4178.

October 10: 102nd Annual Fall Festival "Celebrate Exeter, Hometown America" 7am-4pm
You will not want to miss this year's Fall Festival and all the Fun Family events that will be happening throughout October. Fall Festival Week is October 5th thru the 10th. Saturday, October 10th is Fall Festival!! This year will continue old and new traditions, Car Show, Parade, Brat eating contest, Art & Craft Vendors, Food and live entertainment featuring Run 4 Cover and much more!! Fall Festival in the City Park begins at 7 am. The parade begins at 10 am down Pine Street in downtown Exeter. There will also be a Pancake breakfast at 7 am at the arbor on Cedar Street at the City Park. The Exeter Kiwanis Club sponsors the annual Pancake Breakfast. For more information, call (559) 592-2919. There will also be a 10k run and two mile walk at City Park. Registration begins at 6 am and the race starts at 7am. For more information regarding this event, call (559) 592-5262.

October 10: Book Sale, 8am-4pm
Exeter will be hosting their annual book sale at the Fall Festival Celebration at Exeter City Park. Hundreds of books will be for sale on the library patio at 230 East Chestnut. Exeter Friends in now in their second year and going strong. Community support is appreciated in assisting us with our goal of helping the Exeter Library grow and prosper.

October 10: "Just Walk" With a Doc, 8-9am
The Healthy Visalia Committee working in partnership with Kaweah Delta Health Care District, Family HealthCare Network, Tulare County Medical Society and the Visalia Parks and Recreation Dept. continues its 2015 Visalia's "Just Walk" With a Doc walking program. The walks will take place at Blain Park, 3101 S. Court St., in Visalia.

October 10: 4th Annual Health & Wellness Conference, 10am-4pm
The 4th Annual Health & Wellness Conference will be held in Visalia at the Lampliter Inn, 3300 W Mineral King Avenue. This year's keynote speaker will be Flora Johnson, Director of Grandma's House of Tulare. The luncheon tickets are $25, CME"s being offered. Vendors are wanted. Door/Raffle Prize. Please contact Dr Rucker at 559-635-8104 or 559- 635-4210, or visit her online mylene_rucker@yahoo.com

October 10: Living History Day, 10am-4pm
History comes alive again at the Three Rivers Historical Museum, celebrating life in Three Rivers from 1850-1910. See Buffalo Soldiers * Antique Firearms & Leather Saddlery * Mule Packing *Kids Games * Photography* Candle Making *Special arrangements with Sequoia Natural History Association. For more information contact: Tom Marshall Phone: 559-561-4085 Web: www.3rmuseum.org Email: history@3rmuseum.org

October 10: Pioneer Days Rib Cook-Off & Pageant, 11am-3pm
Calling all backyard BBQ enthusiasts! Try your hand at grilling the perfect barbecue ribs for a chance to win cash prizes or the People's Choice trophy. The 4th annual Pioneer Days and Rib Cook-off will give grilling fanatics of all levels the venue to showcase their skills. Cost to enter the cook-off is only $100 and includes the ribs. YThe event is hosted by Porterville Parks and Leisure and the Jackass Mail Run Association. It is a fundraiser with 100% of the proceeds from the competitions going to preserve and protect Porterville's Zalud House Museum. For more details, visit the City of Porterville website, call (559) 791-7695 or visit the Heritage Center at 256 E. Orange Avenue.

October 10: Tea Tasting Evening Gala to Celebrate Autumn Moon Festival, 6pm
Hosted by Center for Integrated Medicine, this year's theme is "All the Tea in China." Tea sampling; Excellent workshop with education sheets for tea comparison. Chinese hors d'oeuvres & Moon Cakes. Door Prizes; Learn the significance of the cultural holiday; Autumn Moon Festival role in Chinese History. Performances by local artists. Please bring your own Asian tea cup to sample various types of teas and a stand-alone candle/lantern for evening light. All proceeds will benefit the Asian Cultural Society (Chinese New Year Event). $20.00 per person. RSVP: Center for Integrated Medicine at 559-625-4246. For menu and other details, log on to Facebook under Center for Integrated Medicine or visit our website www.allholisticmed.com

October 10: Fantasy Casino Night, 6-10pm
Experience the thrill of Casino Royale - 007...at the Porterville Fairgrounds 2700 W. Teapot Dome. Fantastic food, silent auction, black jack, poker, roulette, bingo, & Best Costume. Win fabulous prizes All proceeds support local charities. Contact Bank of Sierra, Stafford's Famous Chocolates, ITC or the Chamber for more info and tickets, $35.

October 10: KRC Safety Fall Shootout
King of the West 410, Sprint Car Series, USAC West Coast 360 Sprints, and Western RaceSaver Sprints (Weekend before Trophy Cup) will be held at Thunderbowl Raceway at Tulare Fairgrounds. For information, visit www.thunderbowlraceway.com.

October 11: Porterville Health and Safety Fair, 2-5pm
Sponsored by Family HealthCare Network. For more information, call Isable Olmos at 280-1956

October 12: College of the Sequoias Great Books Discussion Group, 4-5:30pm
The group meets second and fourth Mondays monthly in the COS campus' Hospital Rock 133 room in front of the Book Store, just SE of Kern. Tonight's topic: Sigmund Freud, Thoughts for the Times on War and Death.

October 12: 13th Annual Band Showcase, 7:30pm
The Visalia Education Foundation (VEF) will be hosting the 13th Annual Band Showcase at Groppetti Automotive Visalia Community Stadium. Come see the El Diamante, Golden West, Mt. Whitney and Redwood high school bands perform their halftime shows. The high school cheer and dance squads will also be performing. The gates will open at 6pm. Pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs, nachos, candy and drinks will be available for purchase. Donations are $4 per person or $12 per family. Proceeds from this event help purchase musical instruments and support music and performance programs in our VUSD schools. For more information call (559) 730-7518 or email us at info@visaliaedfoundation.org.

October 14: Way Back Wednesdays--Classic Flicks at the Fox, 7pm
On the second Wednesday monthly through April, 2016, the Visalia Fox Theatre presents a classic film. Admission is $5 and includes a small popcorn. Tonight: The Exorcist, 1973.

October 14: Maverick's Coffee House Presents Rex Allen, Jr., 7pm
The name "Rex Allen" brings back fond memories of yesteryear! On Saturday at the hometown cinema you could catch the latest western movie of Rex Allen and his beautiful horse Koko, along with a Lash LaRue or Wild Bill Elliot film. Well Rex may have gone where the good cowboys go, however that resonant voice of the last singing cowboy has not been lost to the public. His son, Rex Allen Jr., brings that same mellow and familiar voice to his performances. This is Rex's first visit to Mavericks and we hope it is isn't his last. Come on out and help us welcome Rex to Visalia, an old cowboy town. Call 559 624-1400 or stop by Mavericks at 238 E. Caldwell Avenue (Court and Caldwell) for a cup of the famous coffee and pick up your tickets. Doors open at 6pm, show time is 7pm. Seating is limited. Tickets $35.

October15: "The Spirit of Oktoberfest Celebration," 5pm
Tulare Downtown Association and VIP Pizza in Tulare present "The Spirit of Oktoberfest Celebration" at VIP Pizza. 235 N K Street in Tulare.

Sports

Bronc-rider Jacob Lee returns to the West Hills Coalinga rodeo team this year, which begins the season up north this week. Courtesy/West Hills College Coalinga

West Hills Coalinga Rodeo Teams Head North For Fall Competitions

Staff Reports

West Hills College Coalinga's men and women's rodeo teams started their season this week with a trip north to competitions at Lassen College and Feather River College.

WHCC will compete in a series of four rodeos over five days at the neighboring schools, having started on September 30 and continuing until October 4, with 34 students competing in nine rodeo events ranging from barrel racing to bareback riding.

"These rodeos are very important as they constitute 40% of our season, which culminates in April and decides individual and team champions," said Rodeo Coach Justin Hampton.

More than 200 students from a total of 16 schools are anticipated to participate in the four rodeos.

WHCC team members will compete in anywhere from one to four events each, depending on the individual.

The next rodeo they will attend will be held at home on March 10 and 11.

Bike Tour Against Trafficking Raising Awareness in Central Valley

Staff Reports

The Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin presents The Tour Against Trafficking. This is an initiative to raise awareness regarding human trafficking throughout the Central California as well as raising funds to support groups working to end human trafficking.

From October 2-23, a group of bicyclists (5 to 8 from the Tour Team) will ride 750 miles over 18 days throughout Central California. As the Tour goes through communities, towns and cities, the Tour Team will be joined by others, including various cycling clubs throughout the Valley. Large numbers of cyclists are anticipated during different "legs" of the Tour. The Tour will have 26 stops which include each church throughout the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin. The stops will provide opportunity for a well-deserved rest (one leg of the tour involves a climb of 8000 ft as well as two 70+ mile days and one 80+ mile day), an occasion to offer interviews to the press, and to join together with supporters and friends of the Tour in the local community. Riders of the Tour are encouraging sponsorship and all the proceeds will go directly to local agencies and organizations in the Valley who offer support to victims of trafficking.

The Tour is in consultation and cooperation with local government, law enforcement, DA offices, social service agencies, faith based ecumenical partners, universities-colleges-and-schools and the cycling community in towns and cities throughout the Valley.

The Tour will be in Visalia on Friday, October 9. Riding into Visalia, the cyclists will be met by local supporters at the Peace Officers Memorial Park at the corner of Woodland and Burrel across from the Tulare County Sheriff's Office. The riders are expected to arrive between 9:30 - 10:00am. When they arrive they will be greeted by local officials including Supervisor Allen Ishida representing the County Board of Supervisors, representatives from the Tulare County Sheriff's Office and the Tulare County District Attorney's Office as well as a representative from the Visalia City Council.

Donations are being accepted on the website "TourAgainstHumanTrafficking.org". Locally, individuals can log and support Family Services of Tulare County.

This tour event is a follow up to the Forum on Human Trafficking that was held at 210 in August. The 210 forum included viewing a short documentary film called "The Trafficked Life" by filmmaker Michael Fagans. After viewing the documentary a group of panelists which included victims of trafficking discussed the reality and impact of the crime of human trafficking.

On Facebook at facebook.com/ourvalleyvoice

Porterville Students Step Up in Banner Contest

Nancy Vigran

Porterville Parks and Recreation Department is once again taping into local student creativity for the Fourth Annual Step Up Banner Contest.

But, it is more than an art contest, said Amy Graybehl, leisure services specialist.

Step Up is a countywide gang-prevention task force formed in 2007. The goal is to create and follow plans to prevent and combat gang activity. Porterville has its own Step Up Committee, which created the banner contest.

"The committee seeks to decrease gang activity and support positive options for youths and their families," Graybehl said. "They were trying to spread the word about Step Up and also give kids a way to express themselves," she added regarding the banner contest.

"It's been a good way to get kids thinking about it," she said.

The Porterville contest has continued to grow with 700 students entering last year.

There are four age group divisions – K-3rd grade; 4th-6th grade; 7th-8th grade; and 9th-12th grade.

The initial round of judging is done by the city's Youth Commission members, which serve the youth throughout the local community. The commission narrows down entries to their favorite top three in each division. The local Step Up Committee does the final judging.

There are winners in each category with a final top entry picked. That entry lines the side of a Porterville transit bus for the following year and the winner earns a $250 gift card.

The bus banner is a constant reminder of Step Up and its efforts and the space is donated by the city's transit authority.

Another category was formed last year, when Mr. Marquez' fourth-grade class from Oak Grove Elementary had an enormous entry along with a class group project, Graybehl said.

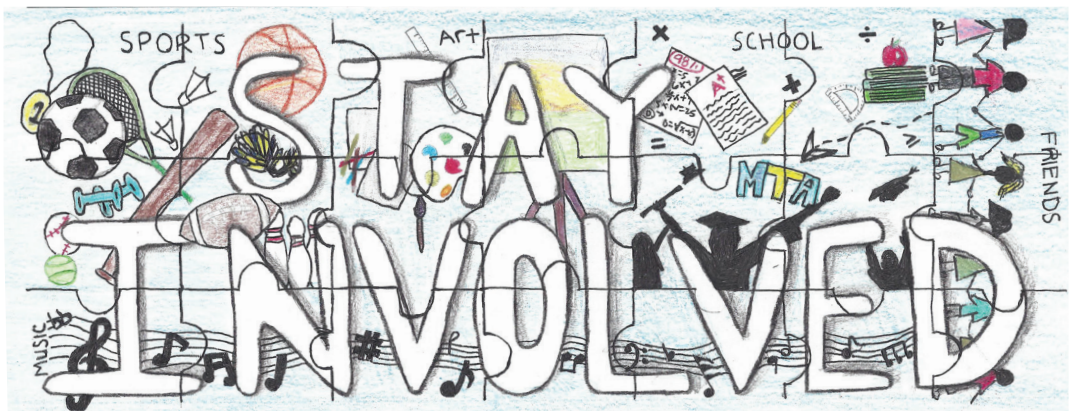
"It inspired us to give them a special prize," she said. They had an ice cream party.

This year, the award is available again.

Entries are limited to Porterville students. The deadline is Wednesday, October 7. Entries may be turned in at school administration offices, or the parks and leisure office. Winners will be announced during the Step Up Summit in November.

Last year's winner was Berenice Almanza, then 11th-grader from Monache High School.

For more information, call (559) 782-7521.



Last year's winning banner, sent by Monache High School student Berenice Almanza.

The Porterville Youth Commission (PYC) held their first meeting of the new school year in September in the City Hall Council Chambers. The Youth Commission was established in 2008 by the Porterville City Council to serve as a representative body which provides insight and recommendations to the City Council and City department directors. Each year, local high schools are invited to nominate two students to serve on the PYC for a one-year term. The PYC meets regularly on the second Monday of each month.

Commissioners pictured left to right:
(Front) Madyson Gonzales, Burton Horizon Academy; Macey Aqra, Harmony Magnet Academy; Kim Cortez, Strathmore (Middle) Jonathan Gonzalez, Porterville; Taylor Ruffa, Summit Charter (Back) Rhyane Shanley, Harmony Magnet Academy; Andreina Rodriguez, Strathmore; Carlos Pena, Porterville; Kassandra Valdovinos, Citrus; Lucas Resurreccion, Citrus; Eduardo Gomez, Summit Charter (not pictured: Joslyn Buckley & Isabel LoBue, Monache). Photo courtesy of Porterville Parks & Leisure.

Scarecrow

Continued from p. 17

second and third place, and the judges' favorite gets a trophy they can keep, plus an ad in the chamber magazine."

Guidelines for entering into the Exeter Scarecrow Contest include:

- Display scarecrows from October 1-31
- Only Exeter Chamber members are eligible for prizes
- For those who do not have a storefront, they can partner with a member who does
- May not be a factory made scarecrow
- No entry will be accepted that reflects controversial, social or political situations

The chamber wants people to get creative by personalizing their scarecrow to express the originator or business/organization. They also want it to show off a product the business carries or specializes in.

For the resident category, creativity and personalizing remain important. The entry rules are similar in that entries may not be store-bought or factory-made scarecrows; and no entry that reflects controversial, social or political situations will be allowed.

Exeter's Fall Festival starts at 7am on Saturday, October 10 with a 10K run or 2-mile walk; and the annual Exeter Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast in Exeter City Park. The annual parade starts at 10 along Pine Street. The daylong festivities include live music, arts and crafts booths, contests and food.

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Festival

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Good Time for a Good Cause

Tastemakers is not just a chance to drink, eat and be merry. All proceeds from the event will go toward funding year-round free music classes at the Tulare and Visalia Boys and Girls Clubs.

"We've been doing the summer classes for six years now with the Boys and Girls club of Visalia," said Gomes. "At the end of the summer, you get kinda bummed out. You think, 'I can't wait until we find the right group of people and do it all year.' We've found those people."

The foundation is banking on this fundraising festival doing the job. The year-round classes will start in October, and Gomes says the group hopes to add the Fresno area in the near future.

"We can sustain this if the numbers work out right," he said. "I don't think there's ever been anything like this in Visalia. You have to be a bit more affluent usually to get that (music lessons). Now that they (the public) know that's where the money is going, they're really getting behind the festival. I want everybody to see what the whole picture is about."

Buying Tickets

Tickets for the event start at $5, and are available online at tastemakersfestival.com or at Velouria Records, 109 E. Main St. in Visalia. VIP tickets that include access to a shaded lounge area, free appetizers and shorter drink lines are also available. A package of six VIP tickets, plus a T-shirt and poster are $250. Other ticket packages are available.

Local Music, Local Flavor

Food for the festival is being provided by a trio of local eateries, Pita Kabob, the Planning Mill Artisan Pizza and Quesadilla Gorilla. The Cellar Door is donating wine for the event, and Tioga Sequoia Brewery will present a selection of its more popular beers, along with surprise offerings available only at the festival. Other event sponsors include the Visalia Rawhide, Tulare County Federal Credit Union and 4 Creeks Creative.

The six local acts performing include Visalia's Slow Season (classic rock/psychedelia), Evelyn ('90s indie) and The Gospel Whiskey Runners ("They're more like Americana folk. Being local and great people, we want them in the mix," Gomes said). Fresno-based acts include Dirty Limbs (garage punk) and Light Thieves (experimental art rock).

"Everybody's local," said Gomes. "The reason Wand's on is because we didn't want to put heat on a local as the headliner."

Personal Milestone

For Gomes, who is turning 40 this year, the Tastemakers Festival marks an important time in his personal and professional life.

"I really want to take this to the next generation level," he said. "I'm stoked because some of my kids, as a teacher, are going to be taking drum lessons. For the first time, they're going to cross over in a cool way."